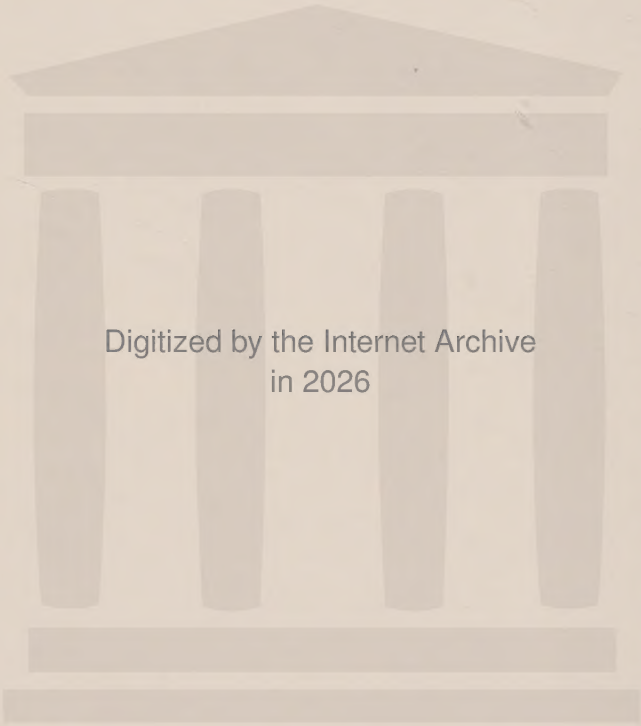
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The Poets and the Poetry of the Nineteenth Century

Percy B. Shelley

The Poets and the Poetry of the Nineteenth Century

Robert Southey

to

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Edited by

ALFRED H. MILES

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In the prefatory note of the first edition of this work (1891) the Editor invited criticism with a view to the improvement of future editions. Several critics responded to this appeal, and their valuable suggestions have been considered in preparing this re-issue. In some cases the text has been revised and the selection varied; in others, additions have been made to complete the representation. The biographical and bibliographical matter has been brought up to date.—A. H. M.

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PREFATORY.

THIS volume treats of the poets born between the years 1774 and 1792, the period of Southey, Landor, Campbell, Moore, Byron, and Shelley.

Of these, Southey has receded from the proud position which gained for him laureate precedence, while Landor has advanced in fame and favour. Campbell has lost the honours brought him by his longer poems; but still lives in the hearts of his countrymen by virtue of his sea-songs and battle-ballads. Moore still sings the dirge of the "Last Rose of Summer," and survives in the popularity of a score of other Irish melodies, though his Oriental fictions have ceased to exercise their earlier charm. Byron has lost and gained by turns as time has passed, and is still the object of no little controversy; while Shelley has outlived the prejudice of his contemporaries, and in a day of larger charity has gained a better understanding and a wider fame. Of the minor poets of the period, Charles Lamb and Leigh Hunt still maintain their hold upon our affections, and are cherished in our memories for the rare association of fine critical insight and delicate creative skill. Ebenezer Elliot records the struggle of his generation for free bread, a struggle which made him the founder of the family of the political poets of the people. The mention of

Sheridan Knowles recalls a long series of successful plays, which show that in his day, at least, poetic form was no impediment to stage success, but also, it must be added, that the poetic dramas of the century have succeeded upon the boards in an inverse ratio to their poetic power. William Tennant has an interest, apart from the merit of his verse, as the founder of the "new style of poetry," adopted by Hookham Frere for his "Monks and the Giants," and for ever perpetuated by Lord Byron in "Don Juan." Robert Tannahill still holds high rank among the lyrists of Scotland, and a warm place in the affections of his countrymen. The name of Thomas Love Peacock revives the memory of an interesting personality and much original, if not unique, work. The sonnets of Sir Aubrey de Vere yet emit a mild and pleasant fragrance and justify Wordsworth's admiration. The poetry of Edwin Atherstone evidences powers capable of higher achievements had they been associated with less ambition and more restraint. Some of Barry Cornwall's songs still live embalmed in the music they inspired, as does his name enshrined in loving memory.

Grateful acknowledgment is due to Messrs. Bell & Sons, for the use of some of Barry Cornwall's verse; and to Mr. Aubrey de Vere, for information concerning his father.

A. H. M.

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Robert Southey

to

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Robert Southey.

1774—1843.

Robert Southey, poet, essayist, and historian, was born at Bristol on the 12th of August, 1774. His father, who was a linendraper, gave him such advantages as local schools afforded, until the year 1788, when his uncle, the Rev. Herbert Hill, sent him to Westminster School. Here he remained four years, and made several friends who were useful to him in after life, and in conjunction with whom he started a school periodical called *The Flagilant*, in which he distinguished himself by denouncing the brutal and demoralizing administration of corporal punishment that obtained in his time, for which offence he was expelled the school in 1792. Proceeding to Oxford in the following year he entered Balliol College, where his study does not seem to have profited him much. "All I learnt," he said himself, "was a little swimming"—"and a little boating."—"I never remember to have dreamt of Oxford,—a sure proof how little it entered into my moral being; of school, on the contrary, I dream perpetually." In 1794 Coleridge was introduced to him at Oxford, and formed with him an enthusiastic friendship. At this time Southey was much disturbed as to his future career, and was thinking seriously of emigration, when Coleridge breathed into his willing ear the idea of the Pantisocracy, a

scheme of a humanitarian and socialistic character, for the founding of a new state, on communistic lines, under the free skies of the western republic. This rosy fancy kept possession of their minds for some time, and a number of adherents were secured including Robert Lovell, a college companion of Southey's, and the poetic partner of his first volume. Want of capital, however, proved a supreme difficulty, and the Pantisocracy, like so many other dreams of the enthusiastic, faded naturally away.

In 1795 Southey's first volume appeared under the title of "Poems," etc., "by Robert Lovell and Robert Southey, of Balliol College." This was followed in 1796 by "Joan of Arc," which, like his "Wat Tyler," written in 1794, and surreptitiously published in 1817, was largely fired by the excitement of the French Revolution; and in 1797 by a volume of miscellaneous poems.

The poet's future now became the serious consideration. His uncle, who had generously borne the cost of his education, desired him to enter the Church, but for conscientious reasons he felt bound to decline this course. Surgery was proposed, but "the horrors of the dissecting room" were beyond endurance, and this idea was also abandoned. The law was next thought of, but at this juncture the poet's uncle proposed that he should go abroad for six months, learn something of the literature and languages, the poetry and history of Europe, and then return to the study of the law. This opportunity timed well with Southey's necessities. His means were now of the slenderest description, and dinnerless days and supperless nights were no uncommon experience with him. Here was six

months provided for, and the opportunity of acquiring a fund of literary capital for future use. But Southey had formed a tie, (a bow only, but one) which he did not care to leave unknotted while he crossed the seas. On the 14th of November, 1795, having borrowed the money for the purchase of the ring and the licence, of Cottle, the Bristol publisher, he privately married, at St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, Edith Fricker of that town, whose sister Sara, on the 4th of the preceding month, had been wedded at the same altar to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and another of whose sisters was already the wife of Robert Lovell. Bidding farewell to his newly-made wife at the door of the church immediately after the ceremony, he started for Lisbon in company with his uncle, then chaplain of the British factory there, while Edith resumed her maiden name, and took up her residence with the Cottles. Returning from Lisbon in 1796, Southey entered himself at Gray's Inn for the study of the law, a profession which proved as unsuited to his nature as were the others he had abandoned. He was far too honest a man to shirk his duty because it was unpleasant, and with much sacrifice of inclination he applied himself laboriously to his studies. "I commit wilful murder on my own intellect," he wrote, "by drudging at the law." And again, "I am not indolent, I loathe indolence, but, indeed, reading law is laborious indolence—it is thrashing straw." And later, "I was once afraid that I should have a deadly deal of law to forget whenever I had done with it; but my brains, God bless them, never received any, and I am as ignorant as heart could wish. The tares would not grow." In April, 1800, Southey paid

another visit to Spain and Portugal, remaining abroad some nine or ten months, collecting materials for future work, and finishing "Thalaba the Destroyer," his first great poem, which was published during his absence from England. On his return home in 1801 he visited Coleridge at Greta Hall, near Keswick, where he was destined to spend so many years of his later life, and later in the same year went to Ireland in the capacity of private secretary to Mr. Corry, the Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer, a post which he only held for a few months.

"Thalaba" was the firstfruits of one of Southey's earliest ambitions, for he tells us himself that even in his school days he had formed the design of writing a great poem on each of the more important mythologies. "Thalaba" is based upon the Mahometan, and is written in an irregular form of blank verse. This form, of which an example will be found on pp. 21-24 is one of great power and flexibility—less powerful, as the poet admitted, than decasyllabic blank verse; but involving less restraint, and giving larger scope for spontaneity. Southey describes it as "the Arabesque ornament of an Arabian tale," and as such it is perhaps the fitting garb of an Oriental fiction—a lawless measure for a lawless song. The poem recounts the adventures and triumphs of an Arabian hero at war with the powers of evil, but though often characterized by beauty of expression and grandeur of scene, lacks the human interest which attaches only to the record of the thoughts, feelings, and actions of men and women moving within the limits of natural law, and the sphere of human sympathy.

In 1803, Southey, having definitely determined to follow the profession of literature, took up his residence at Greta Hall, sharing the building with the Coleridges, and with Mrs. Lovell, who had become a widow, and who found asylum here. In 1805 he published "Madoc," an epic which describes the supposed discovery and conquest of Mexico by a Welsh prince of the twelfth century. "Madoc," which was thought by Southey at the time to be the greatest poem he should ever write, though admired by Landor, and read and re-read by Scott with increasing interest, was the least successful of his longer poems. The subject was too remote in point of time and place to have any vital interest for the busy world of the new century.

"The Curse of Kehama," published in 1810, is founded on the Hindoo mythology, and though, as Sir Henry Taylor points out, it travels farther than "Thalaba" beyond the region of human sympathies, it has the advantage, from the reader's point of view, of being written in rhyme, and to this its greater success was probably due. Some of its scenes are described with great power, and invested with wild splendour, but its characters are a strange mingling of the human and the divine, and as such are powerless to awaken any strong measure of sympathy either in gods or men.

In 1813 Southey was appointed poet-laureate, and in the following year 1814 published "Roderick, the Last of the Goths," together with a volume of odes. "Roderick" was the last of his great poems, and is in many respects the best. It is a noble work, combining moral grandeur, tragic interest, and pathetic incident, and it has the advantage

of being based on the traditions of a fascinating period of European history. It is full of vivid pictures and powerful situations. The story of the flight of Roderick from the field of battle, upon which Count Julian, aided by the Moors, avenged the outrage of his daughter Florinda, and overthrew the Christian power in Spain; and of his subsequent wanderings and experiences in exile, are told with a power worthy of the theme, and a pathos and dignity which sustain interest and enkindle sympathy; and the scenes in which under cover of his priestly disguise, he confesses Florinda,—interviews his mother,—and administers extreme unction to Count Julian and then reveals himself, rise to a power which would seem almost sufficient to preserve the poem from neglect.

During this year (1813) Southey, while in London, was introduced by Rogers to Byron, who was much impressed by the appearance, manners, and conversation of the laureate. He described him as of "epic appearance" and declared that to have had his head and shoulders he would have almost written his sapphics. "Southey's talents," wrote Byron, in his diary, "are of the first order. His prose is perfect," Again: "He has probably written too much of poetry for the present generation; posterity will probably select; but he has passages equal to anything." "Roderick" he spoke of as "the first poem of the time."

Southey's next poetical publication was a collection of minor poems, followed by his "Carmen Triumphale;" "The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo;" and, the "Lay of the Laureate." In 1821 he published his "Vision of Judgment," a work which

would have fallen quietly into oblivion, but for the merciless satire of Byron, who ridiculed it in another poem under the same name.

Of Southey's occasional pieces, his "Ode written during the negotiations with Buonaparte in January 1814" (p. 63), and his "Funeral Song for the Princess Charlotte of Wales" (p. 68), are fine examples on the one hand of power and passion, and on the other of grace and beauty of expression. The poet regarded Napoleon as "a mean tyrant," who ought to have been put "under the ban of human nature," many of whose actions history might call public and political, but truth declared to be private and personal, for which he ought to have been held answerable as a criminal before the law. While full of this feeling, this powerful ode was written, and here, at least, passion, which, as a rule, played too small a part in Southey's poetry, is dominant and extreme.

Southey's shorter poems are far too numerous to mention, and it is said that between the age of twenty and thirty he burned more verse than he published during his whole lifetime. He had a facile pen and a power of rhyming that cost him no effort, and, as in his time there was a market in the columns of the daily papers, such as the *Morning Post*, for trifles such as he threw off with ease, he accepted the opportunity as one of which he had no need to be ashamed, for aiding the resources of his all too slender purse. These include ballads humorous and pathetic, some of which became favourites, and have retained their popularity to the present time. Of these "The Battle of Blenheim" (p. 11), and "Lord William" (p. 15), are examples,

as are also "The Well of St. Keyne," "Mary, the Maid of the Inn," "The Old Woman of Berkeley," "The Inchcape Rock," "Bishop Bruno," and others which are still remembered. Though Southey was never in a wide sense a popular poet, he was not wanting in tokens of public recognition. He was presented with the degree of LL.D. by the University of Oxford and offered a baronetcy by Sir Robert Peel. This latter he wisely declined, though he accepted a pension of £300 from the same source (1835). In 1837 Mrs. Southey died, and in 1839 he married Caroline Bowles, herself a graceful and pathetic writer of verse. The poet's later years were saddened by mental affliction involving loss of memory and inability to recognize his nearest and dearest friends. To use his own pathetically humorous words, "he began to die at the top." After long and painful weakness, he passed away on the 21st of March, 1843.

Of Southey as a man it is difficult to speak too highly. His lofty morality, his pure integrity, his unselfish generosity, his stupendous industry, his unfailing courage, his simple affection, and his cheerful piety, mark him out as a giant among men—a beacon on the highway of life. The honorary labour he undertook on behalf of struggling talent or for the benefit of those who had been bereaved, was continuous and exacting. The volumes he edited and produced for the benefit of others, "The Works of Chatterton," "The Remains of Henry Kirke White," "The Poems of Robert Anderson," etc., etc., would form a creditable list for any ordinary man; while the brotherly generosity shown by him to the families of his friends Coleridge and Lovell, and

the readiness with which he placed the whole of his savings, some £625, at the disposal of his friend, John May, in a time of need, show him to have preserved the spirit of the Pantisocracy through all the changes of life and opinion of the intervening years. Southey's high sense of duty and purity of heart led him to place the good before the great, or rather to deem goodness the highest form of greatness; to quote his friend, Sir Henry Taylor, "There were greater poets in his generation, and there were men of a deeper and more far-reaching philosophic faculty, but take him for all in all,—his ardent and genial piety, his moral strength, the magnitude and variety of his powers, the field which he covered in literature, and the beauty of his life,—it may be said of him, justly and with no straining of the truth, that of all his contemporaries he was the greatest MAN" (*Ward's "English Poets"*).

Southey's prose works, by which he will be best remembered, include a "Life of Nelson;" a "Life of John Wesley;" "The Book of the Church;" a "History of the Peninsular War;" a "History of Brazil;" "The Doctor" (an extraordinary miscellany); "Essays, Moral and Political;" Lives of Cromwell and Bunyan, as well as works on Sir Thomas More, Cowper, Chatterton, and Kirke White. These were more successful in finding a public, and some of them will hold their places as English classics.

Southey's poetry gives ample evidence of many of the qualities that go to make a great poet, and it is to be regretted that his choice of subject and the necessity for his continued literary application prevented him doing justice to the powers he undoubtedly

possessed. Professor Dowden, in his "Southey" ("English Men of Letters" series), says, "On the whole, judged by the highest standards, Southey's poetry takes a mid-most rank; it neither renders into art a great body of thought and passion, nor does it give faultless expression to lyrical moments. But it is the out-put of a large and vigorous mind, amply stored with knowledge; its breath of life is the moral ardour of a nature strong and generous, and therefore it can never cease to be of worth." Though cherishing high poetic ambition, it was not as a poet but as an historian that he expected to be remembered, and had he but lived to complete his Histories of Portugal, of English Literature, and the Monastic Orders he might have gained the object of his ambition. He had strong imagination, and powers of description equal to its requirements, as well as all a poet's art in putting what he had to say; but he lacked dramatic power, and was deficient in the sensuous and passionate elements without which imagination is apt to be hard and description cold, and by which alone the poet reaches that "touch of nature" which not only "makes the whole world kin," but brings all time into sympathy.

ALFRED H. MILES.

SHORTER POEMS.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

I.

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM.

1798.

IT was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done,
And he, before his cottage door,
Was sitting in the sun;
And by him sported on the green,
His little grandchild, Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
That he, beside the rivulet
In playing there, had found;
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh,—
"'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,
"Who fell in the great victory.

"I find them in my garden, for
There's many hereabout;
And often, when I go to plough,
The ploughshare turns them out!
For many thousand men," said he,
"Were slain in that great victory."

"Now tell us what 'twas all about,"
Young Peterkin, he cries;
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
"Now tell us all about the war,
And what they fought each other for?"

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,
"Who put the French to rout;
But what they fought each other for,
I could not well make out;
But everybody said," quoth he,
"That 'twas a famous victory!

"My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by;
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

"With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then
And new-born baby died;
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

"They say it was a shocking sight,
After the field was won;
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

"Great praise the Duke of Marlboro' won,
And our good Prince Eugene."
"Why 'twas a very wicked thing!"
Said little Wilhelmine.
"Nay,—nay,—my little girl," quoth he,
"It was a famous victory!"

"And everybody praised the Duke
Who this great fight did win."
"But what good came of it at last?"
Quoth little Peterkin.
"Why, that I cannot tell," said he,
"But 'twas a famous victory."

II.

THE HOLLY TREE.

1798.

O READER! hast thou ever stood to see
The Holly Tree?
The eye that contemplates it well perceives
Its glossy leaves
Order'd by an intelligence so wise,
As might confound the Atheist's sophistries.

Below, a circling fence, its leaves are seen
Wrinkled and keen;
No grazing cattle through their prickly round
Can reach to wound;
But as they grow where nothing is to fear,
Smooth and unarm'd the pointless leaves appear.

I love to view these things with curious eyes,
And moralize:
And in this wisdom of the Holly Tree
Can emblems see
Wherewith perchance to make a pleasant rhyme,
One which may profit in the aftertime.

Thus, though abroad perchance I might appear
Harsh and austere,
To those who on my leisure would intrude
Reserved and rude,
Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be
Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree.

And should my youth, as youth is apt I know,
Some harshness show,
All vain asperities I day by day
Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the Holly Tree.

And as when all the summer trees are seen
So bright and green,
The Holly leaves a sober hue display
Less bright than they,
But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the Holly Tree?

So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng,
So would I seem among the young and gay
More grave than they,
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the Holly Tree.

III.

LORD WILLIAM.

1798.

NO eye beheld when William plunged
Young Edmund in the stream,
No human ear but William's heard
Young Edmund's drowning scream.

Submissive, all the vassals own'd
The murderer for their lord,
And he, as rightful heir, possess'd
The house of Erlingford.

The ancient house of Erlingford
Stood in a fair domain,
And Severn's ample waters near
Roll'd through the fertile plain;

And often the way-faring man
Would love to linger there,
Forgetful of his onward road,
To gaze on scenes so fair.

But never could Lord William dare
To gaze on Severn's stream;
In every wind that swept its waves
He heard young Edmund's scream.

In vain, at midnight's silent hour
Sleep closed the murderer's eyes,
In every dream the murderer saw
Young Edmund's form arise.

In vain by restless conscience driven
Lord William left his home,
Far from the scenes that saw his guilt,
In pilgrimage to roam.

To other climes the pilgrim fled,
But could not fly despair;
He sought his home again, but peace
Was still a stranger there.

Slow were the passing hours, yet swift
The months appear'd to roll;
And now the day return'd that shook
With terror William's soul;—

A day that William never felt
Return without dismay,
For well had conscience calendar'd
Young Edmund's dying day.

A fearful day was that! the rains
Fell fast with tempest roar,
And the swoln tide of Severn spread
Far on the level shore.

In vain Lord William sought the feast,
In vain he quaff'd the bowl,
And strove with noisy mirth to drown
The anguish of his soul;—

The tempest, as its sudden swell
In gusty howlings came,
With cold and death-like feeling seem'd
To thrill his shuddering frame.

Reluctant now, as night came on,
His lonely couch he prest;

And, wearied out, he sunk to sleep,—
To sleep—but not to rest.

Beside that couch his brother's form,
Lord Edmund, seem'd to stand,
Such, and so pale, as when in death
He grasp'd his brother's hand;

Such, and so pale his face, as when
With faint and faltering tongue,
To William's care, a dying charge,
He left his orphan son.

"I bade thee with a father's love
My orphan Edmund guard;—
Well, William, hast thou kept thy charge!
Now take thy due reward."

He started up, each limb convulsed
With agonizing fear;
He only heard the storm of night,—
'Twas music to his ear!

When, lo! the voice of loud alarm
His inmost soul appals;
"What ho! Lord William, rise in haste!
The water saps thy walls!"

He rose in haste,—beneath the walls
He saw the flood appear;
It hemm'd him round,—'twas midnight now,
No human aid was near.

He heard a shout of joy, for now
A boat approach'd the wall,
And eager to the welcome aid
They crowd for safety all.

"My boat is small," the boatman cried,
"'Twill bear but one away;
Come in, Lord William, and do ye
In God's protection stay."

Strange feeling fill'd them at his voice,
Even in that hour of woe,
That, save their lord, there was not one
Who wish'd with him to go.

But William leapt into the boat,—
His terror was so sore;
"Thou shalt have half my gold," he cried,
"Haste!—haste to yonder shore!"

The boatman plied the oar, the boat
Went light along the stream;
Sudden Lord William heard a cry
Like Edmund's drowning scream!

The boatman paused, "Methought I heard
A child's distressful cry!"
"'Twas but the howling wind of night,"
Lord William made reply.

"Haste!—haste!—ply swift and strong the oar;
Haste!—haste across the stream!"
Again Lord William heard a cry
Like Edmund's drowning scream!

"I heard a child's distressful voice,"
The boatman cried again.
"Nay, hasten on!—the night is dark—
And we should search in vain!"

"O God! Lord William, dost thou know
How dreadful 'tis to die?

And canst thou without pity hear
A child's expiring cry ?

"How horrible it is to sink
Beneath the closing stream,
To stretch the powerless arms in vain,
In vain for help to scream !"

The shriek again was heard : it came
More deep, more piercing loud ;
That instant o'er the flood the moon
Shone through a broken cloud ;

And near them they beheld a child ;
Upon a crag he stood,
A little crag, and all around
Was spread the rising flood.

The boatman plied the oar, the boat
Approach'd his resting-place ;
The moon-beam shone upon the child,
And show'd how pale his face.

"Now reach thine hand !" the boatman cried,
"Lord William, reach and save !"
The child stretch'd forth his little hands
To grasp the hand he gave !

Then William shriek'd ; the hands he felt
Were cold, and damp, and dead !
He held young Edmund in his arms
A heavier weight than lead !

The boat sunk down, the murderer sunk
Beneath the avenging stream ;
He rose, he shriek'd, no human ear
Heard William's drowning scream !

IV.

STANZAS WRITTEN IN HIS LIBRARY.

1818.

MY days among the Dead are past;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old;
My never failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedew'd
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the Dead, with them
I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the Dead, anon
My place with them will be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all Futurity;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

THALABA, THE DESTROYER

1800—1.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

THE YOUTH OF THALABA.

From Book III.

(XVI.)

It was the wisdom and the will of Heaven,
That in a lonely tent had cast
The lot of Thalaba;
There might his soul develop best
Its strengthening energies;
There might he from the world
Keep his heart pure and uncontaminate,
Till at the written hour he should be found
Fit servant of the Lord, without a spot.

(XVII.)

Years of his youth, how rapidly ye fled
In that beloved solitude!
Is the morn fair, and doth the freshening breeze
Blow with cold current o'er his cheek?
Lo! underneath the broad-leaved sycamore
With lids half-closed he lies,
Dreaming of days to come.
His dog beside him, in mute blandishment,
Now licks his listless hand;
Now lifts an anxious and expectant eye,
Courting the wonted caress.

(XVIII.)

Or comes the Father of the Rains
From his caves in the uttermost West,
Comes he in darkness and storms?
When the blast is loud,
When the waters fill
The traveller's tread in the sands;
When the pouring shower
Streams adown the roof;
When the door-curtain hangs in heavier folds:
When the out-strain'd tent flaps loosely:
Within there is the embers' cheerful glow,
The sound of the familiar voice,
The song that lightens toil,—
Domestic Peace and Comfort are within:
Under the common shelter, on dry sand,
The quiet Camels ruminate their food;
The lengthening cord from Moath falls,
As patiently the Old Man
Entwines the strong palm-fibres; by the hearth
The Damsel shakes the coffee grains,
That with warm fragrance fill the tent;
And while, with dexterous fingers, Thalaba
Shapes the green basket, haply at his feet
Her favourite kidling gnaws the twig,
Forgiven plunderer, for Oneiza's sake.

(XXII.)

'Tis the cool evening hour;
The Tamarind from the dew
Sheathes its young fruit, yet green.
Before their tent the mat is spread;
The Old Man's solemn voice
Intones the holy Book.

What if beneath no lamp-illumined dome,
Its marble walls, bedeck'd with flourish'd truth,
Azure and gold adornment? Sinks the word
With deeper influence from the Imam's voice,
Where, in the day of congregation, crowds
Perform the duty-task?
Their Father is their Priest,
The Stars of Heaven their point of prayer,
And the blue Firmament
The glorious Temple, where they feel
The present Deity.

(XXIII.)

Yet through the purple glow of eve
Shines dimly the white moon.
The slacken'd bow, the quiver, the long lance,
Rest on the pillar of the Tent.
Knitting light palm-leaves for her brother's brow,
The dark-eyed damsel sits;
The Old Man tranquilly
Up his curl'd pipe inhales
The tranquillising herb.
So listen they the reed of Thalaba,
While his skill'd fingers modulate
The low, sweet, soothing, melancholy tones.

(XXIV.)

Or if he strung the pearls of Poesy,
Singing with agitated face
And eloquent arms, and sobs that reach the heart,
A tale of love and woe;
Then, if the bright'ning Moon that lit his face,
In darkness favour'd hers,

Oh! even with such a look, as fables say,
The Mother Ostrich fixes on her egg,
Till that intense affection
Kindle its light of life,
Even in such deep and breathless tenderness
Oneiza's soul is centred on the youth,
So motionless, with such an ardent gaze,
Save when from her full eyes
She wipes away the swelling tears
That dim his image there.

(xxv.)

She call'd him Brother; was it sister-love
For which the silver rings
Round her smooth ankles and her tawny arms
Shone daily brighten'd? for a brother's eye
Were her long fingers tinged,
As when she trimm'd the lamp,
And through the veins and delicate skin
The light shone rosy? that the darken'd lids
Gave yet a softer lustre to her eye?
That with such pride she trick'd
Her glossy tresses, and on holy-day
Wreathed the red flower-crown round
Their waves of glossy jet?—
How happily the days
Of Thalaba went by!
Years of his youth, how rapidly ye fled!

THE CURSE OF KEHAMA.

1809—10.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

I.

THE FUNERAL OF ARVALAN.

From Book I.

(I.)

Midnight, and yet no eye
Through all the Imperial City closed in sleep!
Behold her streets a-blaze
With light that seems to kindle the red sky,
Her myriads swarming through the crowded ways!
Master and slave, old age and infancy,
All, all abroad to gaze;
House-top and balcony
Clustered with women, who throw back their veils
With unimpeded and insatiate sight
To view the funeral pomp which passes by,
As if the mournful rite
Were but to them a scene of joyance and delight.

(II.)

Vainly, ye blessed twinklers of the night,
Your feeble beams ye shed,
Quench'd in the unnatural light which might out-stare
Even the broad eye of day;
And thou from thy celestial way
Pourest, O Moon, an ineffectual ray!
For lo! ten thousand torches flame and flare
Upon the midnight air,

Blotting the lights of heaven
With one portentous glare.
Behold the fragrant smoke in many a fold
Ascending, floats along the fiery sky,
And hangeth visible on high,
A dark and waving canopy.

(III.)

Hark! 'tis the funeral trumpet's breath!
'Tis the dirge of death!
At once ten thousand drums begin,
With one long thunder-peal the ear assailing;
Ten thousand voices then join in,
And with one deep and general din
Pour their wild wailing.
The song of praise is drown'd
Amid the deafening sound;
You hear no more the trumpet's tone,
You hear no more the mourner's moan,
Though the trumpet's breath, and the dirge of death,
Swell with commingled force the funeral yell.
But rising over all in one acclaim
Is heard the echoed and the re-echoed name,
From all that countless rout:
Arvalan! Arvalan!
Arvalan! Arvalan!
Ten times ten thousand voices in one shout
Call Arvalan! The overpowering sound,
From house to house repeated rings about,
From tower to tower rolls round.

(IV.)

The death-procession moves along;
Their bald heads shining in the torches' ray,

The Bramins lead the way,
Chanting the funeral song.
And now at once they shout,
Arvalan! Arvalan!
With quick rebound of sound,
All in accordant cry,
Arvalan! Arvalan!
The universal multitude reply.
In vain ye thunder in his ear the name;
Would ye awake the dead?
Borne upright in his palankeen,
There Arvalan is seen.
A glow is on his face—a lively red;
It is the crimson canopy
Which o'er his cheek a reddening shade hath shed;
He moves—he nods his head—
But the motion comes from the bearers' tread,
As the body, borne aloft in state,
Sways with the impulse of its own dead weight.

(v.)

Close following his dead son Kehama came,
Nor joining in the ritual song,
Nor calling the dear name;
With head deprest and funeral vest,
And arms enfolded on his breast,
Silent and lost in thought he moves along.
King of the World, his slaves unenvying now
Behold their wretched Lord; rejoiced they see
The mighty Rajah's misery;
That Nature in his pride hath dealt the blow,
And taught the Master of Mankind to know
Even he himself is man, and not exempt from woe.

(VI.)

O sight of grief! the wives of Arvalan,
Young Azla, young Nealliny, are seen!
Their widow-robes of white,
With gold and jewels bright,
Each like an Eastern queen.
Woe! woe! around their palankeen,
As on a bridal day,
With symphony, and dance, and song,
Their kindred and their friends come on.
The dance of sacrifice! the funeral song!
And next the victim slaves in long array,
Richly bedight to grace the fatal day,
Move onward to their death;
The clarions' stirring breath
Lifts their thin robes in every flowing fold,
And swells the woven gold,
That on the agitated air
Flutters and glitters to the torches' glare.

(VII.)

A man and maid of aspect wan and wild,
Then, side by side, by bowmen guarded, came;
O wretched father! O unhappy child!
Them were all eyes of all the throng exploring—
Is this the daring man
Who raised his fatal hand at Arvalan?
Is this the wretch condemn'd to feel
Kehama's dreadful wrath?
Then were all hearts of all the throng deploring,
For not in that innumerable throng
Was one who loved the dead; for who could know
What aggravated wrong
Provoked the desperate blow!

(VIII.)

Far, far behind, beyond all reach of sight,
In order'd files the torches flow along,
One ever-lengthening line of gliding light:
Far—far behind,
Rolls on the undistinguishable clamour
Of horn, and trump, and tambour;
Incessant as the roar
Of streams which down the wintry mountain pour,
And louder than the dread commotion
Of breakers on a rocky shore,
When the winds rage over the waves,
And Ocean to the Tempest raves.

(IX.)

And now toward the bank they go,
Where, winding on their way below,
Deep and strong the waters flow.
Here doth the funeral pile appear
With myrrh and ambergris bestrew'd,
And built of precious sandalwood.
They cease their music, and their outcry here;
Gently they rest their bier;
They wet the face of Arvalan—
No sign of life the sprinkled drops excite;
They feel his breast,—no motion there;
They feel his lips,—no breath;
For not with feeble, nor with erring hand,
The brave Avenger dealt the blow of death.
Then with a doubling peal and deeper blast,
The tambours and the trumpets sound on high,
And with a last and loudest cry
They call on Arvalan.

II.

THE RETREAT.

From Book XIII.

(v.)

'Twas a fair scene wherein they stood,
A green and sunny glade amid the wood,
And in the midst an aged Banian grew.
It was a goodly sight to see
That venerable tree,
For o'er the lawn, irregularly spread,
Fifty straight columns propt its lofty head;
And many a long depending shoot,
Seeking to strike its root,
Straight like a plummet, grew towards the ground.
Some on the lower boughs which crost their way
Fixing their bearded fibres, round and round,
With many a ring and wild contortion wound;
Some to the passing wind at times, with sway
Of gentle motion swung;
Others of younger growth, unmoved, were hung
Like stone-drops from the cavern's fretted height;
Beneath was smooth and fair to sight,
Nor weeds nor briars deform'd the natural floor,
And through the leafy cope which bower'd it o'er
Came gleams of chequer'd light.
So like a temple did it seem, that there
A pious heart's first impulse would be prayer.

(vii.)

They built them here a bower, of jointed cane,
Strong for the needful use, and light and long
Was the slight framework rear'd, with little pain;
Lithe creepers, then, the wicker sides supply,

And the tall jungle-grass fit roofing gave
Beneath the genial sky.
And here did Kailyal, each returning day,
Pour forth libations from the brook to pay
The Spirits of her Sires their grateful rite;
In such libations, pour'd in open glades,
Beside clear streams and solitary shades,
The Spirits of the virtuous dead delight.
And duly here, to Marriataly's praise,
The Maid, as with an angel's voice of song,
Pour'd her melodious lays
Upon the gales of even,
And gliding in religious dance along,
Moved graceful as the dark-eyed Nymphs of Heaven,
Such harmony to all her steps was given.

(VIII.)

Thus ever, in her Father's doating eye,
Kailyal perform'd the customary rite;
He, patient of his burning pain the while,
Beheld her, and approved her pious toil;
And sometimes at the sight,
A melancholy smile
Would gleam upon his aweful countenance.
He, too, by day and night, and every hour,
Paid to a higher Power his sacrifice;
An offering, not of ghee, or fruit, and rice,
Flower-crown, or blood; but of a heart subdued,
A resolute, unconquer'd fortitude,
An agony represt, a will resign'd,
To her, who, on her secret throne reclin'd,
Amid the Sea of Milk by Veeshnoo's side,
Looks with an eye of mercy on mankind.
By the Preserver, with his power endued,

There Voomdavee beholds this lower clime,
And marks the silent sufferings of the good,
To recompense them in her own good time.

(IX.)

O force of faith! O strength of virtuous will!
Behold him in his endless martyrdom,
Triumphant still!
The Curse still burning in his heart and brain,
And yet doth he remain
Patient the while, and tranquil, and content!
The pious soul hath framed unto itself,
A second nature, to exist in pain
As in its own allotted element.

(X.)

Such strength the will reveal'd had given
This holy pair, such influxes of grace,
That to their solitary resting place
They brought the peace of Heaven.
Yea, all around was hallow'd! Danger, Fear,
Nor thought of evil ever enter'd here.
A charm was on the Leopard when he came
Within the circle of that mystic glade;
Submiss he crouch'd before the heavenly maid,
And offer'd to her touch his speckled side;
Or with arch'd back erect, and bending head,
And eyes half-closed for pleasure, would he stand,
Courting the pressure of her gentle hand.

(XI.)

Trampling his path through wood and brake,
And canes which crackling fall before his way,
And tassel-grass, whose silvery feathers play

O'ertopping the young trees,
On comes the Elephant, to slake
His thirst at noon in yon pellucid springs.
Lo! from his trunk upturn'd, aloft he flings
The grateful shower; and now
Plucking the broad-leaved bough
Of yonder plane, with wavy motion slow,
Fanning the languid air,
He moves it to and fro.
But when that form of beauty meets his sight,
The trunk its undulating motion stops.
From his forgetful hold the plane-branch drops,
Reverent he kneels, and lifts his rational eyes
To her, as if in prayer;
And when she pours her angel voice in song,
Entranced he listens to the thrilling notes,
Till his strong temples, bathed with sudden dews,
Their fragrance of delight and love diffuse.

(XII.)

Lo! as the voice melodious floats around,
The Antelope draws near,
The Tigress leaves her toothless cubs to hear;
The Snake comes gliding from the secret brake,
Himself in fascination forced along
By that enchanting song;
The antic Monkeys, whose wild gambols late,
When not a breeze waved the tall jungle grass,
Shook the whole wood, are hush'd, and silently
Hang on the cluster'd tree.
All things in wonder and delight are still;
Only at times the nightingale is heard,
Not that in emulous skill that sweetest bird,
Her rival strain would try

A mighty songster, with the Maid to vie;
She only bore her part in powerful sympathy.

(XIII.)

Well might they thus adore that heavenly Maid!
For never Nymph of Mountain,
Or Grove, or Lake, or Fountain,
With a diviner presence fill'd the shade.
No idle ornaments deface
Her natural grace,
Musk-spot, nor sandal-streak, nor scarlet stain,
Ear-drop nor chain, nor arm nor ankle-ring,
Nor trinketry on front, or neck, or breast,
Marring the perfect form: she seem'd a thing
Of Heaven's prime uncorrupted work, a child
Of early nature undefiled,
A daughter of the years of innocence.
And therefore all things loved her. When she stood
Beside the glassy pool, the fish, that flies
Quick as an arrow from all other eyes
Hover'd to gaze on her. The mother bird,
When Kailyal's step she heard,
Sought not to tempt her from her secret nest,
But hastening to the dear retreat, would fly
To meet and welcome her benignant eye.

RODERICK,

The Last of the Goths.

1814.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

I. Count Julian by the aid of the Moors avenges the outrage of his daughter Florinda and overthrows the Christian power in Spain.—II. Roderick goes into exile, becomes a monk, and, unrecognised in his priestly garments, (III.) confesses Florinda, (IV.) visits his mother, (V.) administers extreme unction to Count Julian who has been assassinated, and then reveals himself, and (VI.) having regained his war-horse Orelio leads the Spanish forces to the reconquest of the Moors, and finally disappears from the field of victory. Dots thus . . . indicate lines omitted.

I.

THE FLIGHT OF RODERICK.

(FROM BOOK I.)

Bravely in that eight-days fight
The King had striven, for victory first, while hope
Remain'd, then desperately in search of death.
The arrows passed him by to right and left,
The spear-point pierced him not, the scymitar
Glanced from his helmet. Is the shield of Heaven,
Wretch that I am, extended over me?
Cried Roderick; and he dropt Orelio's reins,
And threw his hands aloft in frantic prayer,
Death is the only mercy that I crave,
Death soon and short, death and forgetfulness!
Aloud he cried; but in his inmost heart
There answer'd him a secret voice, that spake
Of righteousness and judgment after death,
And God's redeeming love, which fain would save
The guilty soul alive. 'Twas agony,
And yet 'twas hope; a momentary light,
That flash'd through utter darkness on the Cross

To point salvation, then left all within
Dark as before. Fear, never felt till then,
Sudden and irresistible as stroke
Of lightning, smote him. From his horse he dropt,
Whether with human impulse, or by Heaven
Struck down, he knew not; loosen'd from his wrist
The sword-chain, and let fall the sword, whose hilt
Clung to his palm a moment ere it fell,
Glued there with Moorish gore. His royal robe,
His horned helmet and enamelled mail,
He cast aside, and taking from the dead
A peasant's garment, in those weeds involved,
Stole like a thief in darkness, from the field.

Evening closed round to favour him. All night
He fled, the sound of battle in his ear
Ringing, and sights of death before his eyes,
With forms more horrible of eager fiends
That seemed to hover round, and gulphs of fire
Opening beneath his feet. At times the groan
Of some poor fugitive, who, bearing with him
His mortal hurt, had fallen beside the way,
Roused him from these dread visions, and he call'd
In answering groans on his Redeemer's name,
That word the only prayer that pass'd his lips
Or rose within his heart. Then would he see
The Cross whereon a bleeding Saviour hung,
Who call'd on him to come and cleanse his soul
In those all-healing streams, which from his wounds,
As from perpetual springs, for ever flow'd.
No hart e'er panted for the water-brooks
As Roderick thirsted there to drink and live:
But Hell was interposed; and worse than Hell—
Yea to his eyes more dreadful than the fiends

Who flock'd like hungry ravens round his head,—
Florinda stood between, and warn'd him off
With her abhorrent hands,—that agony
Still in her face, which, when the deed was done,
Inflicted on her ravisher the curse
That it invoked from Heaven.—Oh what a night
Of waking horrors! Nor when morning came
Did the realities of light and day
Bring aught of comfort: wheresoe'er he went
The tidings of defeat had gone before;
And leaving their defenceless homes to seek
What shelter walls and battlements might yield,
Old men with feeble feet, and tottering babes,
And widows with their infants in their arms,
Hurried along. Nor royal festival,
Nor sacred pageant, with like multitudes
E'er fill'd the public way. All whom the sword
Had spared were here; bed-rid infirmity
Alone was left behind: the cripple plied
His crutches,—with her child of yesterday
The mother fled, and she whose hour was come
Fell by the road.

Less dreadful than this view
Of outward suffering which the day disclosed,
Had night and darkness seem'd to Roderick's heart,
With all their dread creations. From the throng
He turn'd aside, unable to endure
This burthen of the general woe: nor walls,
Nor towers, nor mountain fastnesses he sought;
A firmer hold his spirit yearned to find,
A rock of surer strength. Unknowing where,
Straight through the wild he hasten'd on all day,
And with unslacken'd speed was travelling still
When evening gathered round.

II.

RODERICK IN EXILE.

(FROM BOOK III.)

'Twas now the earliest morning; soon the Sun,
Rising above Albardos, pour'd his light
Amid the forest, and with ray aslant
Entering its depth, illumed the branchless pines,
Brighten'd their bark, tinged with a redder hue
Its rusty stains, and cast along the floor
Long lines of shadow, where they rose erect
Like pillars of the temple. With slow foot
Roderick pursued his way; for penitence,
Remorse which gave no respite, and the long
And painful conflict of his troubled soul,
Had worn him down. . . .
From morn till eve
He journey'd, and drew near Leyria's walls.
'Twas even-song time, but not a bell was heard:
Instead thereof, on her polluted towers,
Bidding the Moors to their unhallow'd prayer,
The cryer stood, and with his sonorous voice
Fill'd the delicious vale where Lena winds
Thro' groves and pastoral meads. The sound, the sight
Of turban, girdle, robe, and scymitar,
And tawny skins, awoke contending thoughts
Of anger, shame, and anguish in the Goth;
The face of human-kind so long unseen
Confused him now, and through the streets he went
With haggëd mien, and countenance like one
Crazed or bewilder'd. All who met him turn'd,
And wonder'd as he pass'd. One stopt him short,
Put alms into his hand, and then desired,

In broken Gothic speech, the moon-struck man
To bless him. With a look of vacancy
Roderick received the alms; his wandering eye
Fell on the money, and the fallen King,
Seeing his own royal impress on the piece,
Broke out into a quick convulsive voice,
That seem'd like laughter first, but ended soon
In hollow groans suppressed: the Musselman
Shrunk at the ghastly sound, and magnified
The name of Allah as he hasten'd on.
A Christian woman spinning at her door
Beheld him, and, with sudden pity touch'd,
She laid her spindle by, and running in
Took bread, and following after call'd him back,
And placing in his passive hands the loaf,
She said, Christ Jesus for his mother's sake
Have mercy on thee! With a look that seem'd
Like idiotcy he heard her, and stood still,
Staring awhile; then bursting into tears
Wept like a child, and thus relieved his heart,
Full even to bursting else with swelling thoughts.
So through the streets, and through the northern gate
Did Roderick, reckless of a resting-place,
With feeble yet with hurried step, pursue
His agitated way: and when he reached
The open fields, and found himself alone
Beneath the starry canopy of Heaven,
The sense of solitude, so dreadful late,
Was then repose and comfort. There he stopt
Beside a little rill, and brake the loaf;
And shedding o'er that long untasted food
Painful but quiet tears, with grateful soul
He breathed thanksgiving forth, then made his bed
On heath and myrtle.

III.

RODERICK AND FLORINDA.

(FROM BOOK X.)

FLORINDA sate
Beholding Roderick with fix'd eyes intent,
Yet unregardant of the countenance
Whereon they dwelt; in other thoughts absorb'd,
Collecting fortitude for what she yearn'd,
Yet trembled to perform. Her steady look
Disturb'd the Goth, albeit he little ween'd
What agony awaited him that hour.
Her face, well nigh as changed as his, was now
Half-hidden, and the lustre of her eye
Extinct; nor did her voice awaken in him
One startling recollection when she spake,
So altered were its tones.

Father, she said,
All thankful as I am to leave behind
The unhappy walls of Cordoba, not less
Of consolation doth my heart receive
At sight of one to whom I may disclose
The sins which trouble me, and at his feet
Lay down repentantly, in Jesu's name,
The burthen of my spirit. In his name
Hear me, and pour into a wounded soul
The balm of pious counsel. . . .

Here thou seest
One who is known too fatally for all,
The daughter of Count Julian.—Well it was
For Roderick that no eye beheld him now:
From head to foot a sharper pang than death
Thrill'd him; his heart, as at a mortal stroke,

Ceased from its functions: his breath fail'd, and when
The power of life recovering set its springs
Again in action, cold and clammy sweat
Starting at every pore suffused his frame.
Their presence help'd him to subdue himself;
For else, had none been nigh, he would have fallen
Before Florinda prostrate on the earth,
And in that mutual agony belike
Both souls had taken flight. She mark'd him not:
For having told her name, she bow'd her head;
Breathing a short and silent prayer to Heaven,
While, as the penitent, she wrought herself
To open to his eye her hidden wounds.

Father, at length she said, all tongues amid
This general ruin shed their bitterness
On Roderick, load his memory with reproach,
And with their curses persecute his soul.—
Why shouldst thou tell me this? exclaim'd the Goth,
From his cold forehead wiping as he spake
The death-like moisture:—Why of Roderick's guilt
Tell me? Or thinkëst thou I know it not?
Alas! who hath not heard the hideous tale
Of Roderick's shame! Babes learn it from their nurses,
And children, by their mothers unreproved,
Link their first execrations to his name.
Oh, it hath caught a taint of infamy,
That, like Iscariot's, through all time shall last,
Reeking and fresh for ever! . . .
Thou too, quoth she, dost join the general curse,
Like one who when he sees a felon's grave,
Casting a stone there as he passes by,
Adds to the heap of shame. Oh what are we,
Frail creatures as we are, that we should sit

In judgment man on man! . . .
I loved the King,—
Tenderly, passionately, madly loved him.
Sinful it was to love a child of earth
With such entire devotion as I loved
Roderick, the heroic Prince, the glorious Goth!
And yet methought this was its only crime,
The imaginative passion seem'd so pure:
Quiet and calm like duty, hope nor fear
Disturb'd the deep contentment of that love:
He was the sunshine of my soul, and like
A flower, I lived and flourish'd in his light.
Oh bear not with me thus impatiently!
No tale of weakness this, that in the act
Of penitence, indulgent to itself,
With garrulous palliation half repeats
The sin it ill repents. I will be brief,
And shrink not from confessing how the love
Which thus began in innocence, betray'd
My unsuspecting heart; nor me alone,
But him, before whom, shining as he shone
With whatsoe'er is noble, whatsoe'er
Is lovely, whatsoever good and great,
I was as dust and ashes. . . .
The King,
By counsels of cold statesmen ill-advised,
To an unworthy mate had bound himself
In politic wedlock. Wherefore should I tell
How Nature upon Egilona's form,
Profuse of beauty, lavishing her gifts,
Left, like a statue from the graver's hands,
Deformity and hollowness beneath
The rich external? For the love of pomp
And emptiest vanity, hath she not incurr'd

The grief and wonder of good men, the gibes
Of vulgar ribaldry, the reproach of all;
Profaning the most holy sacrament
Of marriage, to become chief of the wives
Of Abdalaziz, of the Infidel,
The Moor, the tyrant-enemy of Spain!
All know her now; but they alone who knew
What Roderick was can judge his wretchedness,
To that light spirit and unfeeling heart
In hopeless bondage bound. No children rose
From this unhappy union, towards whom
The springs of love within his soul confined
Might flow in joy and fulness. . . .
My evil fate
Made me an inmate of the royal house,
And Roderick found in me, if not a heart
Like his,—for who was like the heroic Goth?
One which at least felt his surpassing worth,
And loved him for himself.—A little yet
Bear with me, reverend Father, for I touch
Upon the point, and this long prologue goes,
As justice bids, to palliate his offence,
Not mine. The passion, which I fondly thought
Such as fond sisters for a brother feel,
Grew day by day, and strengthen'd in its growth,
Till the beloved presence was become
Needful as food or necessary sleep,
My hope, light, sunshine, life, and every thing.
Thus lapt in dreams of bliss, I might have lived
Contented with this pure idolatry,
Had he been happy: but I saw and knew
The inward discontent and household griefs
Which he subdued in silence; and, alas!
Pity with admiration mingling then,

Alloy'd and lower'd and humanized my love,
Till to the level of my lowliness
It brought him down; and in this treacherous heart
Too often the repining thought arose,
That if Florinda had been Roderick's Queen,
Then might domestic peace and happiness
Have bless'd his home and crown'd our wedded loves.
Too often did that sinful thought recur,
Too feebly the temptation was repell'd.

See, Father, I have probed my inmost soul;
Have search'd to its remotest source the sin;
And tracing it through all its specious forms,
Of fair disguisement, I present it now,
Even as it lies before the eye of God,
Bare and exposed, convicted and condemn'd.
One eve, as in the bowers which overhang
The glen where Tagus rolls between his rocks
I roam'd alone, alone I met the King.
His countenance was troubled, and his speech
Like that of one whose tongue to light discourse
At fits constrain'd, betrays a heart disturb'd:
I too, albeit unconscious of his thoughts,
With anxious looks reveal'd what wandering words
In vain essay'd to hide. A little while
Did this oppressive intercourse endure,
Till our eyes met in silence, each to each
Telling their mutual tale, then consciously
Together fell abash'd. He took my hand
And said, Florinda, would that thou and I
Earlier had met! oh what a blissful lot
Had then been mine, who might have found in thee
The sweet companion and the friend endear'd,
A fruitful wife and crown of earthly joys!

Thou too shouldst then have been of womankind
Happiest, as now the loveliest.—And with that,
First giving way to passion first disclosed,
He press'd upon my lips a guilty kiss,—
Alas! more guiltily received than given.
Passive and yielding, and yet self-reproach'd,
Trembling I stood, upheld in his embrace;
When coming steps were heard, and Roderick said,
Meet me to-morrow, I beseech thee, here,
Queen of my heart! Oh meet me here again,
My own Florinda, meet me here again!
Tongue, eye, and pressure of the impassion'd hand
Solicited and urged the ardent suit,
And from my hesitating hurried lips
The word of promise fatally was drawn.
O Roderick, Roderick! hadst thou told me all
Thy purpose at that hour, from what a world
Of woe had thou and I.—The bitterness
Of that reflection overcame her then,
And choak'd her speech. But Roderick sate the while
Covering his face with both his hands close-prest,
His head bow'd down, his spirit to such point
Of sufferance knit, as one who patiently
Awaits the uplifted sword.
Till now, said she
Resuming her confession, I had lived,
If not in innocence, yet self-deceived,
And of my perilous and sinful state
Unconscious. But this fatal hour reveal'd
To my awakening soul her guilt and shame;
And in those agonies with which remorse,
Wrestling with weakness and with cherish'd sin,
Doth triumph o'er the lacerated heart,
That night—that miserable night—I vow'd,

A virgin dedicate, to pass my life
Immured; and, like redeemëd Magdalen,
Or that Egyptian penitent, whose tears
Fretted the rock and moisten'd round her cave
The thirsty desert, so to mourn my fall.
The struggle ending thus, the victory
Thus, as I thought, accomplish'd, I believed
My soul was calm, and that the peace of Heaven
Descended to accept and bless my vow;
And in this faith, prepared to consummate
The sacrifice, I went to meet the King.
See, Father, what a snare had Satan laid!
For Roderick came to tell me that the Church
From his unfruitful bed would set him free,
And I should be his Queen.
O let me close
The dreadful tale! I told him of my vow;
And from sincere and scrupulous piety,
But more, I fear me, in that desperate mood
Of obstinate will perverse, the which, with pride
And shame and self-reproach, doth sometimes make
A woman's tongue, her own worst enemy,
Run counter to her dearest heart's desire,—
In that unhappy mood did I resist
All his most earnest prayers to let the power
Of holy Church, never more rightfully
Invoked, he said, than now in our behalf,
Release us from our fatal bonds. He urged
With kindling warmth his suit, like one whose life
Hung on the issue: I dissembled not
My cruel self-reproaches, nor my grief,
Yet desperately maintain'd the rash resolve;
Till in the passionate argument he grew
Incensed, inflamed, and madden'd or possess'd,—

For Hell too surely at that hour prevail'd,
And with such subtile toils enveloped him,
That even in the extremity of guilt
No guilt he purported, but rather meant
An amplest recompence of life-long love
For transitory wrong, which fate perverse,
Thus madly he deceived himself, compell'd,
And therefore stern necessity excused.
Here then, O Father, at thy feet I own
Myself the guiltier; for full well I knew
These were his thoughts, but vengeance master'd me,
And in my agony I curst the man
Whom I loved best.
Dost thou recall that curse?
Cried Roderick, in a deep and inward voice,
Still with his head depress'd, and covering still
His countenance. Recall it? she exclaim'd;
Father, I come to thee because I gave
The reins to wrath too long,—because I wrought
His ruin, death, and infamy.—O God,
Forgive the wicked vengeance thus indulged,
As I forgive the King!—But teach me thou
What reparation more than tears and prayers
May now be made;—how shall I vindicate
His injured name, and take upon myself.—
Daughter of Julian, firmly he replied,
Speak not of that, I charge thee! On his fame
The Ethiop dye, fixed ineffaceably,
For ever will abide; so it must be,
So should be: 'tis his rightful punishment;
And if to the full measure of his sin
The punishment hath fallen, the more our hope
That through the blood of Jesus he may find
His sin forgiven him.

Pausing then, he raised
His hand, and pointed where Siverian lay
Stretched on the heath. To that old man, said he,
And to the mother of the unhappy Goth,
Tell, if it please thee,—not what thou hast pour'd
Into my secret ear, but that the child
For whom they mourn with anguish unallay'd,
Sinn'd not from vicious will, or heart corrupt
But fell by fatal circumstance betray'd.
And if in charity to them thou sayest
Something to palliate, something to excuse
An act of sudden frenzy when the fiend
O'ercame him, thou wilt do for Roderick
All he could ask thee, all that can be done
On earth, and all his spirit could endure.

Venturing towards her an imploring look,
Wilt thou join with me for his soul in prayer?
He said, and trembled as he spake. That voice
Of sympathy was like Heaven's influence,
Wounding at once and comforting the soul.
O Father, Christ requite thee! she exclaim'd;
Thou hast set free the springs which withering griefs
Have closed too long. Forgive me, for I thought
Thou wert a rigid and unpitying judge;
One whose stern virtue, feeling in itself
No flaw of frailty, heard impatiently
Of weakness and of guilt. I wrong'd thee, Father!
With that she took his hand, and kissing it,
Bathed it with tears. Then in a firmer speech,
For Roderick, for Count Julian and myself,
Three wretchedest of all the human race,
Who have destroyed each other and ourselves,
Mutually wrong'd and wronging let us pray!

IV.

RODERICK AND HIS MOTHER.

(FROM BOOK XV.)

He went resolved to tell his Mother all,
Fall at her feet, and drinking the last dregs
Of bitterness, receive the only good
Earth had in store for him. Resolved for this
He went; yet was it a relief to find
That painful resolution must await
A fitter season, when no eye but Heaven's
Might witness to their mutual agony.
Count Julian's daughter with Rusilla sate;
Both had been weeping, both were pale, but calm.
With head as for humility abased
Roderick approach'd, and bending, on his breast
He cross'd his humble arms. Rusilla rose
In reverence to the priestly character,
And with a mournful eye regarding him,
Thus she began. Good Father, I have heard
From my old faithful servant and true friend,
Thou didst reprove the inconsiderate tongue,
That in the anguish of its spirit pour'd
A curse upon my poor unhappy child. . . .
Thy Christian charity hath not been lost;—
Father, I feel its virtue:—it hath been
Balm to my heart:—with words and grateful tears,—
All that is left me now for gratitude,—
I thank thee, and beseech thee in thy prayers
That thou wilt still remember Roderick's name.
Roderick so long had to this hour looked on,
That when the actual point of trial came,
Torpid and numb'd it found him; cold he grew,
And as the vital spirits to the heart

Retreated, o'er his withered countenance,
Deathy and damp, a whiter paleness spread.
Unmoved the while the inward feeling seemed,
Even in such dull insensibility
As gradual age brings on, or slow disease,
Beneath whose progress lingering life survives
The power of suffering. Wondering at himself,
Yet gathering confidence, he raised his eyes,
Then slowly shaking as he bent his head,
O venerable Lady, he replied,
If aught may comfort that unhappy soul,
It must be thy compassion, and thy prayers.
She whom he most hath wrong'd, she who alone
On earth can grant forgiveness for his crime,
She hath forgiven him ; and thy blessing now
Were all that he could ask,—all that could bring
Profit or consolation to his soul,
If he hath been, as sure we may believe,
A penitent sincere.
Oh had he lived,
Replied Rusilla, never penitence
Had equall'd his! full well I know his heart,
Vehement in all things. He would on himself
Have wreak'd such penance as had reach'd the height
Of fleshly suffering,—yea, which being told
With its portentous rigour should have made
The memory of his fault, o'erpower'd and lost
In shuddering pity and astonishment,
Fade like a feebler horror. . . .
I ever deem'd his fall
An act of sudden madness ; and this day
Hath in unlook'd-for confirmation given
A livelier hope, a more assurëd faith.
Smiling benignant then amid her tears,

She took Florinda by the hand, and said,
I little thought that I should live to bless
Count Julian's daughter! She hath brought to me
The last, the best, the only comfort earth
Could minister to this afflictëd heart,
And my grey hairs may now unto the grave
Go down in peace.
Happy, Florinda cried,
Are they for whom the grave hath peace in store!
The wrongs they have sustain'd, the woes they bear,
Pass not that holy threshold, where Death heals
The broken heart. O Lady, thou may'st trust
In humble hope, through Him who on the Cross
Gave his atoning blood for lost mankind,
To meet beyond the grave thy child forgiven. . . .
I have a keener sorrow here,—
One which,—but God forefend that dire event,—
May pass with me the portals of the grave,
And with a thought, like sin which cannot die,
Embitter Heaven. My father hath renounced
His hope in Christ! It was his love for me
Which drove him to perdition.—I was born
To ruin all who loved me,—all I loved! . . .
To Roderick then
The pious mourner turn'd her suppliant eyes:
O Father, there is virtue in thy prayers!—
I do beseech thee offer them to Heaven
In his behalf! For Roderick's sake, for mine,
Wrestle with Him whose name is Merciful,
That Julian may with penitence be touch'd,
And clinging to the Cross, implore that grace
Which ne'er was sought in vain. . . .
While thus Florinda spake, the dog who lay
Before Rusilla's feet, eyeing him long

And wistfully, had recognised at length,
Changed as he was and in those sordid weeds,
His royal master. And he rose and lick'd
His wither'd hand, and earnestly look'd up
With eyes whose human meaning did not need
The aid of speech ; and moan'd, as if at once
To court and chide the long-withheld caress.
A feeling uncommix'd with sense of guilt
Or shame, yet painfullest, thrill'd through the King;
But he, to self-controul now long inured,
Repress his rising heart, nor other tears,
Full as his struggling bosom was, let fall
Than seem'd to follow on Florinda's words.
Looking toward her then, yet so that still
He shunn'd the meeting of her eye, he said,
Virtuous and pious as thou art, and ripe
For Heaven, O Lady, I must think the man
Hath not by his good Angel been cast off
For whom thy supplications rise. The Lord
Whose justice doth in its unerring course
Visit the children for the sire's offence,
Shall He not in his boundless mercy hear
The daughter's prayer, and for her sake restore
The guilty parent ? . . .
Thus having said,
Deliberately, in self-possession still,
Himself from that most painful interview
Dispeeding, he withdrew. The watchful dog
Follow'd his footsteps close. But he retired
Into the thickest grove ; there yielding way
To his o'erburthen'd nature, from all eyes
Apart, he cast himself upon the ground,
And threw his arms around the dog, and cried,
While tears streamed down, Thou, Theron, then hast known
Thy poor lost master, Theron, none but thou !

V.

RODERICK AND COUNT JULIAN.

(FROM BOOK XXIV.)

GENTLY his men with slow and steady step
Their suffering burthen bore, and in the Church
Before the altar laid him down, his head
Upon Florinda's knees.—Now, friends, said he,
Farewell. I ever hoped to meet my death
Among ye, like a soldier,—but not thus!
Go join the Asturians; and in after years,
When of your old commander ye shall talk,
How well he loved his followers, what he was
In battle, and how basely he was slain,
Let not the tale its fit completion lack,
But say how bravely was his death revenged.
Vengeance! in that good word doth Julian make
His testament; your faithful swords must give
The will its full performance. Leave me now,
I have done with worldly things. Comrades, farewell,
And love my memory!
They with copious tears
Of burning anger, grief exasperating
Their rage, and fury giving force to grief,
Hasten'd to form their ranks against the Moors.
Julian meantime toward the altar turn'd
His languid eyes: That Image, is it not
St. Peter, he enquired, he who denied
His Lord and was forgiven?—Roderick rejoined,
It is the Apostle; and may that same Lord,
O Julian, to thy soul's salvation bless
The seasonable thought!
The dying Count
Then fix'd upon the Goth his earnest eyes.

No time, said he, is this for bravery,
As little for dissemblance. I would fain
Die in the faith wherein my fathers died,
Whereto they pledged me in mine infancy.—
A soldier's habits, he pursued, have steel'd
My spirit, and perhaps I do not fear
This passage as I ought. But if to feel
That I have sinn'd, and from my soul renounce
The Impostor's faith, which never in that soul
Obtain'd a place, if at the Saviour's feet,
Laden with guilt, to cast myself and cry,
Lord, I believe! help thou my unbelief!
If this in the sincerity of death
Sufficeth,—Father, let me from thy lips
Receive the assurances with which the Church
Doth bless the dying Christian.
Roderick raised
His eyes to Heaven, and crossing on his breast
His open palms, Mysterious are thy ways
And merciful, O gracious Lord! he cried,
Who to this end hast thus been pleased to lead
My wandering steps! O Father, this thy son
Hath sinn'd and gone astray: but hast not Thou
Said, When the sinner from his evil ways
Turneth, that he shall save his soul alive,
And Angels at the sight rejoice in Heaven?
Therefore do I, in thy most holy name,
Into thy family receive again
Him who was lost, and in that name absolve
The Penitent.—So saying, on the head
Of Julian solemnly he laid his hands.
Then to the altar tremblingly he turn'd,
And took the bread, and breaking it, pursued,
Julian! receive from me the Bread of Life!

In silence reverently the Count partook
The reconciling rite, and to his lips
Roderick then held the consecrated cup.

Me too! exclaim'd Florinda, who till then
Had listened speechlessly: Thou Man of God,
I also must partake! The Lord hath heard
My prayers! one sacrament,—one hour,—one grave,
One resurrection!
That dread office done,
Count Julian with amazement saw the Priest
Kneel down before him. By the sacrament
Which we have here partaken, Roderick cried,
In this most awful moment; by that hope,—
That holy faith which comforts thee in death,
Grant thy forgiveness, Julian, ere thou diest!
Behold the man who most hath injured thee!
Roderick, the wretched Goth, the guilty cause
Of all thy guilt,—the unworthy instrument
Of thy redemption,—kneels before thee here,
And prays to be forgiven!
Roderick! exclaim'd
The dying Count,—Roderick!—and from the floor
With violent effort half he raised himself;
The spear hung heavy in his side, and pain
And weakness overcame him, that he fell
Back on his daughter's lap. O Death, cried he,—
Passing his hand across his cold damp brow,—
Thou tamëst the strong limb, and conquerëst
The stubborn heart! But yesterday I said
One Heaven could not contain mine enemy
And me; and now I lift my dying voice
To say, Forgive me, Lord, as I forgive
Him who hath done the wrong!—He closed his eyes

A moment; then with sudden impulse cried,—
Roderick, thy wife is dead,—the Church hath power
To free thee from thy vows,—the broken heart
Might yet be heal'd, the wrong redress'd, the throne
Rebuilt by that same hand which pull'd it down,
And these curst Africans.—Oh for a month
Of that waste life which millions misbestow!—
His voice was passionate, and in his eye
With glowing animation while he spake
The vehement spirit shone: its effort soon
Was past, and painfully with feeble breath
In slow and difficult utterance he pursued,—
Vain hope, if all the evil was ordain'd,
And this wide wreck the will and work of Heaven,
We but the poor occasion! Death will make
All clear, and joining us in better worlds,
Complete our union there! Do for me now
One friendly office more:—draw forth the spear,
And free me from this pain!—Receive his soul,
Saviour! exclaim'd the Goth, as he perform'd
The fatal service. Julian cried, O friend!—
True friend!—and gave to him his dying hand.
Then said he to Florinda, I go first,
Thou followest!—kiss me, child!—and now good-night!

When from her father's body she arose,
Her cheek was flush'd, and in her eyes there beam'd
A wilder brightness. On the Goth she gazed
While underneath the emotions of that hour
Exhausted life gave way. O God! she said,
Lifting her hands, thou hast restored me all,—
All—in one hour!—and round his neck she threw
Her arms and cried, My Roderick! mine in Heaven!
Groaning, he claspt her close, and in that act
And agony her happy spirit fled.

VI.

THE FINAL FIELD.

(FROM BOOK XXV.)

VENGEANCE was the word;
From man to man, and rank to rank it pass'd,
By every heart enforced, by every voice
Sent forth in loud defiance of the foe.
The enemy in shriller sounds return'd
Their Akbar and the Prophet's trusted name.
The horsemen lower'd their spears, the infantry
Deliberately with slow and steady step
Advanced; the bow-strings twang'd, and arrows hiss'd,
And javelins hurtled by. Anon the hosts
Met in the shock of battle, horse and man
Conflicting: shield struck shield, and sword and mace
And curtle-axe on helm and buckler rung;
Armour was riven, and wounds were interchanged,
And many a spirit from its mortal hold
Hurried to bliss or bale. Well did the Chiefs
Of Julian's army in that hour support
Their old esteem; and well Count Pedro there
Enhanced his former praise; and by his side,
Rejoicing like a bridegroom in the strife,
Alphonso through the host of infidels
Bore on his bloody lance dismay and death.
But there was worst confusion and uproar,
There widest slaughter and dismay, where, proud
Of his recover'd Lord, Orelio plunged
Through thickest ranks, trampling beneath his feet
The living and the dead. Where'er he turns
The Moors divide and fly. What man is this,
Appall'd they say, who to the front of war

Bareheaded offers thus his naked life?
Replete with power he is, and terrible,
Like some destroying Angel! Sure his lips
Have drank of Kaf's dark fountain, and he comes
Strong in his immortality! Fly! fly!
They said, this is no human foe!—Nor less
Of wonder fill'd the Spaniards when they saw
How flight and terror went before his way,
And slaughter in his path. Behold, cries one,
With what command and knightly ease he sits
The intrepid steed, and deals from side to side
His dreadful blows! Not Roderick in his power
Bestrode with such command and majesty
That noble war-horse. His loose robe this day
Is death's black banner, shaking from its folds
Dismay and ruin. Of no mortal mould
Is he who in that garb of peace affronts
Whole hosts, and sees them scatter where he turns!
Auspicious Heaven beholds us, and some Saint
Revisits earth! . . .

Siverian, quoth Pelayo, if mine eyes
Deceive me not, yon horse, whose reeking sides
Are red with slaughter, is the same on whom
The apostate Orpas in his vauntery
Wont to parade the streets of Cordoba.
But thou should'st know him best; regard him well:
Is't not Orelio?
Either it is he,
The old man replied, or one so like to him,
Whom all thought matchless, that similitude
Would be the greater wonder. But behold,
What man is he who in that disarray
Doth with such power and majesty bestride

The noble steed, as if he felt himself
In his own proper seat? Look how he leans
To cherish him; and how the gallant horse
Curves up his stately neck, and bends his head,
As if again to court that gentle touch,
And answer to the voice which praises him.
Can it be Maccabee? rejoin'd the King,
Or are the secret wishes of my soul
Indeed fulfill'd, and hath the grave given up
Its dead!—So saying, on the old man he turn'd
Eyes full of wide astonishment, which told
The incipient thought that for incredible
He spake no farther. But enough had past,
For old Siverian started at the words
Like one who sees a spectre, and exclaim'd,
Blind that I was to know him not till now!
My Master, O my Master! . . .

Then Roderick saw that he was known, and turn'd
His head away in silence. But the old man
Laid hold upon his bridle, and look'd up
In his master's face, weeping and silently.
Thereat the Goth with fervent pressure took
His hand, and bending down toward him, said,
My good Siverian, go not thou this day
To war! I charge thee keep thyself from harm!
Thou art past the age for combats, and with whom
Hereafter should thy mistress talk of me
If thou wert gone?—Thou seest I am unarm'd:
Thus disarray'd as thou beholdest me,
Clean through yon miscreant army have I cut
My way unhurt; but being once by Heaven
Preserved, I would not perish with the guilt
Of having wilfully provoked my death.

Give me thy helmet and thy cuirass!—nay,—
Thou wert not wont to let me ask in vain,
Nor to oppose me when my will was known!
To thee methinks I should be still the King.

Thus saying, they withdrew a little way
Within the trees. Roderick alighted there,
And in the old man's armour dight himself.
Dost thou not marvel by what wonderous chance,
Said he, Orelio to his master's hand
Hath been restored? I found the renegade
Of Seville on his back, and hurled him down
Headlong to the earth. The noble animal
Rejoicingly obey'd my hand to shake
His recreant burthen off, and trample out
The life which once I spared in evil hour.
Now let me meet Witiza's viperous sons
In yonder field, and then I may go rest
In peace, my work is done!
And nobly done!
Exclaimed the old man. Oh! thou art greater now
Than in that glorious hour of victory
When grovelling in the dust Witiza lay,
The prisoner of thy hand!—Roderick replied,
O good Siverian, happier victory
Thy son hath now achieved,—the victory
Over the world, his sins and his despair.
If on the field my body should be found,
See it, I charge thee, laid in Julian's grave,
And let no idle ear be told for whom
Thou mournest. Thou wilt use Orelio
As doth beseem the steed which hath so oft
Carried a King to battle:—he hath done
Good service for his rightful Lord to-day,

And better yet must do. Siverian, now
Farewell! I think we shall not meet again
Till it be in that world where never change
Is known, and they who love shall part no more.
Commend me to my mother's prayers, and say
That never man enjoy'd a heavenlier peace
Than Roderick at this hour. O faithful friend,
How dear thou art to me these tears may tell!

With that he fell upon the old man's neck;
Then vaulted in the saddle, gave the reins,
And soon rejoin'd the host. On, comrades, on!
Victory and Vengeance! he exclaim'd, and took
The lead on that good charger, he alone
Horsed for the onset. They with one consent
Gave all their voices to the inspiring cry,
Victory and Vengeance! and the hills and rocks
Caught the prophetic shout and rolled it round. . . .

Oh who could tell what deeds were wrought that day;
Or who endure to hear the tale of rage,
Hatred, and madness, and despair, and fear,
Horror, and wounds, and agony, and death,
The cries, the blasphemies, the shrieks, and groans,
And prayers, which mingled with the din of arms
In one wild uproar of terrific sounds;
While over all predominant was heard,
Reiterate from the conquerors o'er the field,
Roderick the Goth! Roderick and Victory!
Roderick and Vengeance! . . .

The evening darken'd, but the avenging sword
Turn'd not away its edge till night had closed
Upon the field of blood. The Chieftains then

Blew the recall, and from their perfect work
Return'd rejoicing, all but he for whom
All look'd with most expectance. He full sure
Had thought upon that field to find his end
Desired, and with Florinda in the grave
Rest, in indissoluble union join'd.
But still where through the press of war he went
Half-arm'd, and like a lover seeking death,
The arrows past him by to right and left,
The spear-point pierced him not, the scymitar
Glanced from his helmet; he, when he beheld
The rout complete, saw that the shield of Heaven
Had been extended over him once more,
And bowed before its will. Upon the banks
Of Sella was Orelio found, his legs
And flanks incarnadined, his poitral smeared
With froth and foam and gore, his silver mane
Sprinkled with blood, which hung on every hair,
Aspersed like dew-drops; trembling there he stood
From the toil of battle, and at times sent forth
His tremulous voice far echoing loud and shrill,
A frequent, anxious cry, with which he seem'd
To call the master whom he loved so well,
And who had thus again forsaken him.
Siverian's helm and cuirass on the grass
Lay near; and Julian's sword, its hilt and chain
Clotted with blood; but where was he whose hand
Had wielded it so well that glorious day?—

Days, months, and years, and generations pass'd
And centuries held their course, before, far off
Within a hermitage near Viseu's walls
A humble tomb was found, which bore inscribed
In ancient characters King Roderick's name.

ODE,

WRITTEN DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH BUONAPARTE, IN JANUARY, 1814.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

I.

WHO counsels peace at this momentous hour,
When God hath given deliverance to the oppress'd,
And to the injured power?
Who counsels peace, when Vengeance like a flood
Rolls on, no longer now to be repress'd;
When innocent blood
From the four corners of the world cries out
For justice upon one accursed head;
When Freedom hath her holy banners spread
Over all nations, now in one just cause
United; when with one sublime accord
Europe throws off the yoke abhorr'd,
The Loyalty and Faith of Ancient Laws
Follow the avenging sword?

II.

Woe, woe to England! woe and endless shame,
If this heroic land,
False to her feelings and unspotted fame,
Hold out the olive to the Tyrant's hand!
Woe to the world, if Buonaparte's throne

Be suffer'd still to stand!
For by what names shall Right and Wrong be known;—
What new and courtly phrases must we feign
For Falsehood, Murder, and all monstrous crimes,
If that perfidious Corsican maintain
Still his detested reign,
And France, who yearns, even now to break her chain
Beneath his iron rule be left to groan?
No! by the innumerable dead,
Whose blood hath for his lust of power been shed,
Death only can for his foul deeds atone;
That peace which Death and Judgement can bestow,
That peace be Buonaparte's, . . . that alone!

III.

For sooner shall the Ethiop change his skin,
Or from the Leopard shall her spots depart,
Than this man change his old flagitious heart.
Have ye not seen him in the balance weigh'd,
And there found wanting?—On the stage of blood
Foremost the resolute adventurer stood;
And when, by many a battle won,
He placed upon his brow the crown,
Curbing delirious France beneath his sway,
Then, like Octavius in old time,
Fair name might he have handed down,
Effacing many a stain of former crime.
Fool! should he cast away that bright renown!
Fool! the redemption proffer'd should he lose!
WhenHeaven such grace vouchsafed him that the way
To Good and Evil lay
Before him, which to choose.

IV.

But Evil was his Good,
For all too long in blood had he been nurst,
And ne'er was earth with verier tyrant curst.
Bold man and bad,
Remorseless, godless, full of fraud and lies,
And black with murders and with perjuries,
Himself in Hell's whole panoply he clad;
No law but his own headstrong will he knew,
No counsellor but his own wicked heart.
From evil thus portentous strength he drew,
And trampled under foot all human ties,
All holy laws, all natural charities.

V.

O France! beneath this fierce Barbarian's sway
Disgraced thou art to all succeeding times;
Rapine, and blood, and fire have mark'd thy way,
All loathsome, all unutterable crimes.
A curse is on thee, France! from far and wide
It hath gone up to Heaven; all lands have cried
For vengeance upon thy detested head;
All nations curse thee, France! for whereso'er
In peace or war thy banner hath been spread,
All forms of human woe have follow'd there:
The Living and the Dead
Cry out alike against thee! They who bear,
Crouching beneath its weight, thine iron yoke,
Join in the bitterness of secret prayer
The voice of that innumerable throng,
Whose slaughter'd spirits day and night invoke
The everlasting Judge of right and wrong,
How long, O Lord! Holy and Just, how long!

VI.

A merciless oppressor hast thou been,
Thyself remorselessly oppress'd meantime;
Greedy of war, when all that thou couldst gain
Was but to dye thy soul with deeper crime,
And rivet faster round thyself the chain.
O, blind to honour, and to interest blind,
When thus in abject servitude resign'd
To this barbarian upstart, thou could'st brave
God's justice, and the heart of human kind!
Madly thou thoughtest to enslave the world,
Thyself the while a miserable slave.
Behold the flag of vengeance is unfurl'd!
The dreadful armies of the North advance;
While England, Portugal, and Spain combined,
Give their triumphant banners to the wind,
And stand victorious in the fields of France.

VII.

One man hath been for ten long wretched years
The cause of all this blood and all these tears;
One man in this most awful point of time
Draws on thy danger, as he caused thy crime.
Wait not too long the event,
For now whole Europe comes against thee bent;
His wiles and their own strength the nations know;
Wise from past wrongs, on future peace intent,
The People and the Princes, with one mind,
From all parts move against the general foe:
One act of justice, one atoning blow,
One execrable head laid low,
Even yet, O France! averts thy punishment:
Open thine eyes! too long hast thou been blind;
Take vengeance for thyself, and for mankind!

VIII.

France! if thou lov'st thine ancient fame,
Revenge thy sufferings and thy shame!
By the bones that bleach on Jaffa's beach;
By the blood which on Domingo's shore
Hath clogg'd the carrion-birds with gore;
By the flesh that gorged the wolves of Spain,
Or stiffen'd on the snowy plain
Of frozen Muscovy;
By the bodies which lie all open to the sky,
Tracking from Elbe to Rhine the tyrant's flight;
By the widow's and the orphan's cry;
By the childless parent's misery;
By the lives which he hath shed;
By the ruin he hath spread;
By the prayers that rise for curses on his head;
Redeem, O France! thine ancient fame,
Revenge thy sufferings and thy shame;
Open thine eyes!—too long thou hast been blind;
Take vengeance for thyself, and for mankind!

IX.

By those horrors which the night
Witness'd when the torches' light,
To the assembled murderers show'd
Where the blood of Condé flow'd;
By thy murder'd Pichegru's fame;
By murder'd Wright,—an English name;
By murder'd Palm's atrocious doom;
By murder'd Hofer's martyrdom;
Oh! by the virtuous blood thus vilely spilt,
The Villain's own peculiar private guilt,
Open thine eyes! too long hast thou been blind!
Take vengeance for thyself, and for mankind!

FUNERAL SONG

FOR THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES.

1816.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

IN its summer pride array'd,
Low our Tree of Hope is laid!
Low it lies:—in evil hour,
Visiting the bridal bower,
Death hath levell'd root and flower.
Windsor, in thy sacred shade,
(This the end of pomp and power!)
Have the rites of death been paid;
Windsor, in thy sacred shade
Is the Flower of Brunswick laid!

Ye whose relics rest around,
Tenants of this funeral ground!
Know ye, Spirits, who is come,
By immitigable doom
Summon'd to the untimely tomb?
Late with youth and splendour crown'd,
Late in beauty's vernal bloom,
Late with love and joyaunce blest;
Never more lamented guest
Was in Windsor laid to rest.

Henry, thou of saintly worth,
Thou, to whom thy Windsor gave
Nativity, and name, and grave;
Thou art in this hallowed earth
Cradled for the immortal birth!

Heavily upon his head
Ancestral crimes were visited:
He, in spirit like a child,
Meek of heart and undefiled,
Patiently his crown resign'd,
And fix'd on heaven his heavenly mind,
Blessing, while he kiss'd the rod,
His Redeemer and his God.
Now may he in realms of bliss
Greet a soul as pure as his.

Passive as that humble spirit,
Lies his bold dethroner too;
A dreadful debt did he inherit
To his injured lineage due;
Ill-starr'd prince, whose martial merit
His own England long might rue!
Mournful was that Edward's fame,
Won in fields contested well,
While he sought his rightful claim:
Witness Aire's unhappy water,
Where the ruthless Clifford fell;
And when Wharfe ran red with slaughter
On the day of Towton's field,
Gathering, in its guilty flood,
The carnage and the ill-spilt blood
That forty thousand lives could yield.
Cressy was to this but sport,—
Poictiers but a pageant vain;
And the victory of Spain
Seem'd a strife for pastime meant,
And the work of Agincourt
Only like a tournament;
Half the blood which there was spent

Had sufficed again to gain
Anjou and ill-yielded Maine,
Normandy and Aquitaine;
And Our Lady's ancient towers,
Maugre all the Valois' powers,
Had a second time been ours.—
A gentle daughter of thy line,
Edward, lays her dust with thine.

Thou, Elizabeth, art here;
Thou to whom all griefs were known;
Who wert placed upon the bier
In happier hour than on the throne.
Fatal daughter, fatal mother,
Raised to that ill-omen'd station,
Father, uncle, sons, and brother,
Mourn'd in blood her elevation!
Woodville, in the realms of bliss,
To thine offspring thou may'st say,
Early death is happiness;
And favour'd in their lot are they
Who are not left to learn below
That length of life is length of woe.
Lightly let this ground be prest;
A broken heart is here at rest.

But thou, Seymour, with a greeting,
Such as sisters use at meeting,
Joy, and sympathy, and love,
Wilt hail her in the seats above.
Like in loveliness were ye,
By a like lamented doom,
Hurried to an early tomb.

While together, spirits blest,
Here your earthly relics rest,
Fellow angels shall ye be
In the angelic company.

Henry, too, hath here his part;
At the gentle Seymour's side,
With his best beloved bride,
Cold and quiet, here are laid
The ashes of that fiery heart.
Not with his tyrannic spirit,
Shall our Charlotte's soul inherit;
No, by Fisher's hoary head,—
By More, the learned and the good,—
By Katharine's wrongs and Boleyn's blood,—
By the life so basely shed
Of the pride of Norfolk's line,
By the axe so often red,
By the fire with martyrs fed,
Hateful Henry, not with thee
May her happy spirit be!

And here lies one whose tragic name
A reverential thought may claim;
That murder'd Monarch, whom the grave,
Revealing its long secret, gave
Again to sight, that we might spy
His comely face, and waking eye!
There, thrice fifty years, it lay,
Exempt from natural decay,
Unclosed and bright, as if to say,
A plague of bloodier, baser birth,
Than that beneath whose rage he bled
Was loose upon our guilty earth;—
Such awful warning from the dead,

Was given by that portentous eye;
Then it closed eternally.

Ye whose relics rest around,
Tenants of this funeral ground;
Even in your immortal spheres,
What fresh yearnings will ye feel,
When this earthly guest appears!
Us she leaves in grief and tears;
But to you will she reveal
Tidings of old England's weal;
Of a righteous war pursued,
Long, through evil and through good,
With unshaken fortitude;
Of peace in battle twice achieved;
Of her fiercest foe subdued,
And Europe from the yoke reliev'd,
Upon that Brabantine plain!
Such the proud, the virtuous story,
Such the great, the endless glory,
Of her father's splendid reign!
He who wore the sable mail,
Might at this heroic tale,
Wish himself on earth again.

One who reverently, for thee,
Raised the strain of bridal verse,
Flower of Brunswick! mournfully
Lays a garland on thy herse.

Robert Tannahill.

1774—1810.

Robert Tannahill, the Paisley weaver, was born at Paisley on the 3rd of June, 1774. His opportunities of education were limited, but he devoured such books as were within his reach, and made the best of the opportunities he had. An ardent lover of music, he became a proficient player of the flute and fife, and was never more pleased than when, having mastered a melody, he succeeded in wedding it to words of his own. After spending two years at Bolton, he returned to Paisley at the death of his father, and became acquainted with Robert Archibald Smith, the composer, whose admirable setting of many of his lyrics, "Jessie, the Flower of Dumblane," "The Braes o' Balquhither," "The Lass of Arranteenie," and "Loudoun's Bonnie Woods and Braes," gave them wings which carried them throughout the length and breadth of Scotland, and will help to bear them down the avenues of time. The first edition of his songs and poems was published in 1807, and met with a very favourable reception. Two or three years later he made another collection of his songs and poems, which he offered to Messrs. Constable & Co. for publication. Unhappily this famous firm were too busy to undertake its issue at the time, and their refusals

to publish it induced a condition of melancholy, which culminated in a tragic end. All the copies of his works that he could lay his hands on, including the final revisions of his already published songs, and many others which had never been in print, together with all the copies he could gather from his friends, were consigned to the flames, and there were not wanting other signs of the mind diseased. James Hogg made a journey to Paisley on purpose to see him, and the two singers spent a night together, Tannahill walking halfway to Glasgow with the Ettrick shepherd on the following morning. A few weeks after this the strangeness of his manner while on a visit to Glasgow induced a friend to return with him to Paisley, when, after returning to his room, he slipped out of the house unobserved, and was found, after anxious search, lifeless in a pool of water in the neighbourhood. He died on May 17th, 1810.

Setting aside Burns, there is no song-writer more popular in Scotland than Tannahill. His memory is cherished with the deepest affection in his own West country. A gathering, at which the finest of his songs are sung, is annually held on the Braes of Gleniffer, and is attended by crowds from Glasgow, Paisley, and other towns in the neighbourhood. And he thoroughly merits the place he has won in his countrymen's hearts. A poet of the people, he has not received due recognition at the hands of literary critics. He has lines than which there are none sweeter in the Scottish tongue; a lyric could not be "more lightly, musically made" than "Gloomy Winter's now awa'." He had a curiously fine sense of words; his lyrics are as finished in

their diction as they are true and touching in their sentiment and spontaneous in their flow. In one respect he may, perhaps, be said to have excelled Burns; namely, in his delicate aptness of descriptive phrase when dealing with nature:—

"Towering o'er the Newton woods,
Laverocks fan the snaw-white clouds,
Siller saughs, wi' downy buds,
Adorn the banks sae briery, O!
Round the sylvan fairy nooks
Feath'ry breckans fringe the rocks,
'Neath the brae the burnie jouks,
And ilka thing is cheerie, O!"

Truer, simpler, and more graceful words could not have been chosen. The gladness and freshness of a sunny day in the opening spring could not have been more happily rendered. Again, with what fine imaginative truth the eerie feeling of a superstitious Scottish rustic, alone in a moonless, starless night of storm, is rendered in a verse of "O, are ye sleepin', Maggie?"—one of his most beautiful songs:—

"Fearfu' soughs the bour-tree bank,
The rifted wood roars loud and drearie;
Loud the iron yett does clank,
And cry o' howlets makes me eerie.
O, are ye sleepin', Maggie?
O, are ye sleepin', Maggie?
Let me in, for loud the linn
Is roarin' o'er the warlock craigie!"

An exquisite artist was lost by the death of the Paisley weaver. He had not a wide range, he had almost no sense of humour, no satiric or narrative

faculty. His gift was purely lyrical, and the gift was, in its way, perfect. His love-songs, so pure and tender, so graceful in form, so musical, so admirably adapted to be sung, with the fragrance of the woodland braes he loved so well still clinging to the lines, are almost as little likely as the songs of Burns to lose their hold on Scotchmen's hearts.

WALTER WHYTE.

SONGS.

ROBERT TANNAHILL.

I.—LOUDOUN'S BONNIE WOODS AND BRAES.

"LOUDOUN'S bonnie woods and braes,
I maun lea' them a', lassie;
Wha can thole when Britain's faes
Wad gi'e Britons law, lassie?
Wha would shun the field o' danger?
Wha frae fame wad live a stranger?
Now when freedom bids avenge her,
Wha wad shun her ca', lassie?
Loudoun's bonnie woods and braes
Hae seen our happy bridal days,
And gentle hope shall soothe thy waes
When I am far awa', lassie."

"Hark! the swelling bugle sings,
Yielding joy to thee, laddie,
But the dolefu' bugle brings
Waefu' thoughts to me, laddie.
Lanely I maun climb the mountain,
Lanely stray beside the fountain,
Still the weary moments countin',
Far frae love and thee, laddie.
O'er the gory fields of war,
Where vengeance drives his crimson car,
Thou'lt maybe fa', frae me afar,
And nane to close thy e'e, laddie."

"O! resume thy wonted smile!
O! suppress thy fears, lassie!
Glorious honour crowns the toil
That the soldier shares, lassie;
Heaven will shield thy faithful lover
Till the vengeful strife is over,
Then we'll meet nae mair to sever,
Till the day we die, lassie;
'Midst our bonnie woods and braes
We'll spend our peaceful, happy days,
As blithe's yon lightsome lamb that plays
On Loudoun's flowery lea, lassie."

II.—THE WOOD OF CRAIGIE LEA.

THOU bonny wood of Craigie lea!
Thou bonny wood of Craigie lea!
Near thee I pass'd life's early day,
And won my Mary's heart in thee.

The broom, the brier, the birken bush,
Bloom bonny o'er thy flowery lea,
And a' the sweets that ane can wish
Frae Nature's hand, are strew'd on thee.

Far ben thy dark green plantain's shade,
The cushat croodles am'rously,
The mavis, down thy bughted glade,
Gars echo ring frae every tree.

Awa', ye thoughtless, murd'ring gang,
Wha tear the nestlings ere they flee!
They'll sing you yet a canty sang,
Then, O! in pity, let them be!

When winter blaws in sleety showers
Frae aff the Norlan' hills sae hie,
He lightly skiffs thy bonny bowers,
As laith to harm a flower in thee.

Though Fate should drag me south the line,
Or o'er the wide Atlantic sea;
The happy hours I'll ever min'
That I, in youth, hae spent in thee.

III.—GOOD NIGHT.

THE weary sun's gaen down the west,
The birds sit nodding on the tree;
All nature now prepares for rest,
But rest prepared there's none for me.
The trumpet sounds to war's alarms,
The drums they beat, the fifes they play,—
Come, Mary, cheer me wi' thy charms,
For the morn I will be far away.

Good night, and joy—good night, and joy,
Good night, and joy be wi' you a';
For since it's so that I must go,
Good night, and joy be wi' you a'!

I grieve to leave my comrades dear,
I mourn to leave my native shore;
To leave my agèd parents here,
And the bonnie lass whom I adore.
But tender thoughts maun now be hushed,
When danger calls I must obey,
The transport waits us on the coast,
And the morn I will be far away.

Adieu, dear Scotia's sea-beat coast!
Though bleak and drear thy mountains be,
When on the heaving ocean tost
I'll cast a wishful look to thee!
And now, dear Mary, fare thee well,
May Providence thy guardian be!
Or in the camp, or on the field,
I'll heave a sigh, and think on thee!

IV.—THE BRAES O' GLENIFFER.

KEEN blaws the wind o'er the braes o' Gleniffer,
The auld castle's turrets are cover'd wi' snaw;
How changed frae the time when I met wi' my lover
Amang the broom bushes by Stanley green shaw:
The wild flowers o' summer were spread a' sae bonnie,
The mavis sang sweet frae the green birken tree;
But far to the camp they hae march'd my dear Johnnie,
And now it is winter wi' nature and me.

Then ilk thing around us was blythesome and cheery,
Then ilk thing around us was bonny and braw;
Now naething is heard but the wind whistling dreary,
And naething is seen but the wide-spreading snaw.
The trees are a' bare, and the birds mute and dowie,
They shake the cauld drift frae their wings as they flee,
And chirp out their plaints, seeming wae for my Johnnie,
'Tis winter wi' them, and 'tis winter wi' me.

Yon cauld sleety cloud skiffs alang the bleak mountain,
And shakes the dark firs on the stey rocky brae;
While down the deep glen bawls the snaw-flooded fountain,
That murmur'd sae sweet to my laddie and me.
It's no its loud roar on the wintry winds swellin',
It's no the cauld blast brings the tears to my e'e,
For, O! gin I saw but my bonnie Scotch callan',
The dark days o' winter were summer to me!

V.—GLOOMY WINTER'S NOW AWA'.

GLOOMY winter's now awa',
Saft the westlin' breezes blaw,
'Mang the birks o' Stanley shaw
The mavis sings fu' cheery, O!
Sweet the crawflower's early bell
Decks Gleniffer's dewy dell,
Blooming like thy bonnie sel',
My young, my artless dearie, O!

Come, my lassie, let us stray
O'er Glenkilloch's sunny brae,
Blithely spend the gowden day
'Midst joys that never weary, O!
Towering o'er the Newton woods,
Laverocks fan the snaw-white clouds,
Siller saughs, wi' downy buds,
Adorn the banks sae briery, O!

Round the sylvan fairy nooks
Feath'ry breckans fringe the rocks,
'Neath the brae the burnie jouks,
And ilka thing is cheery, O!
Trees may bud, and birds may sing,
Flowers may bloom and verdure spring,
Joy to me they canna bring,
Unless wi' thee, my dearie, O!

VI.—MIDGES DANCE ABOON THE BURN.

THE midges dance aboon the burn;
The dews begin to fa';
The pairtricks down the rushy holm
Set up their e'ening ca'.

Now loud and clear the blackbird's sang
Rings through the briery shaw,
While flitting gay, the swallows play
Around the castle wa'.

Beneath the golden gloaming sky
The mavis mends her lay;
The redbreast pours his sweetest strains
To charm the ling'ring day;
While weary yeldrins seem to wail
Their little nestlings torn,
The merry wren, frae den to den,
Gaes jinking through the thorn.

The roses fauld their silken leaves,
The foxglove shuts its bell;
The honeysuckle and the birk
Spread fragrance through the dell.
Let others crowd the giddy court
Of mirth and revelry,
The simple joys that Nature yields
Are dearer far to me.

VII.—JESSIE, THE FLOWER O' DUMBLANE.

THE sun has gane down o'er the lofty Benlomond,
And left the red clouds to preside o'er the scene,
While lanely I stray in the calm simmer gloamin'
To muse on sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.
How sweet is the brier, wi' its saft faulding blossom,
And sweet is the birk, wi' its mantle o' green;
Yet sweeter and fairer, and dear to this bosom,
Is lovely young Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

She's modest as ony, and blythe as she's bonny;
For guileless simplicity marks her its ain;
And far be the villain, divested o' feeling,
Wha'd blight, in its bloom, the sweet flower o' Dumblane
Sing on, thou sweet mavis, thy hymn to the e'ening,
Thou'rt dear to the echoes of Calderwood glen;
Sae dear to this bosom, sae artless and winning,
Is charming young Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

How lost were my days till I met wi' my Jessie,
The sports o' the city seemed foolish and vain;
I ne'er saw a nymph I would ca' my dear lassie,
Till charm'd wi' sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.
Though mine were the station o' loftiest grandeur,
Amidst its profusion I'd languish in pain;
And reckon as naething the height o' its splendour,
If wanting sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

VIII.—THE LASS O' ARRANTEENIE.

FAR lone amang the Highland hills,
'Midst Nature's wildest grandeur,
By rocky dens, and woody glens,
With weary steps I wander.
The langsome way, the darksome day,
The mountain mist sae rainy,
Are nought to me when gaun to thee,
Sweet lass o' Arranteenie.

Yon mossy rosebud down the howe,
Just op'ning fresh and bonny,
Blinks sweetly 'neath the hazel bough,
And 's scarcely seen by ony;
Sae sweet amidst her native hills,
Obscurely blooms my Jeanie,
Mair fair and gay than rosy May
The flower o' Arranteenie.

Now, from the mountain's lofty brow,
I view the distant ocean,
There Av'rice guides the bounding prow
Ambition courts promotion :—
Let Fortune pour her golden store,
Her laurell'd favours many;
Give me but this, my soul's first wish,
The lass o' Arranteenie.

IX.—THE BRAES O' BALQUHITHER.

LET us go, lassie, go,
To the braes o' Balquhither,
Where the blaeberries grow
'Mang the bonnie Highland heather;
Where the deer and the rae,
Lightly bounding together,
Sport the lang summer day
On the braes o' Balquhither.

I will twine thee a bower
By the clear siller fountain,
And I'll cover it o'er
Wi' the flowers o' the mountain;
I will range through the wilds,
And the deep glens sae dreary,
And return wi' their spoils
To the bower o' my dearie.

When the rude wintry win'
Idly raves round our dwelling,
And the roar of the linn
On the night breeze is swelling;

So merrily we'll sing,
As the storm rattles o'er us,
Till the dear shieling ring
Wi' the light lilting chorus.

Now the summer is in prime,
Wi' the flow'rs richly blooming
And the wild mountain thyme
A' the moorlands perfuming;
To our dear native scenes
Let us journey together,
Where glad Innocence reigns
'Mang the braes o' Balquhither.

X.—BY YON BURN SIDE.

WE'LL meet beside the dusky glen, on yon burn side,
Whare the bushes form a cosie den, on yon burn side;
Though the broomy knowes be green,
Yet, there we may be seen,
But we'll meet—we'll meet at e'en, down by yon burn side.

I'll lead thee to the birken bower, on yon burn side,
Sae sweetly wove wi' woodbine flower, on yon burn side;
There the busy prying eye,
Ne'er disturbs the lovers' joy,
While in ither's arms they lie, down by yon burn side.

Awa', ye rude, unfeeling crew, frae yon burn side,
Those fairy scenes are no for you, by yon burn side;
There fancy smooths her theme,
By the sweetly murm'ring stream,
And the rock-lodged echoes skim, down by yon burn side.

Now the plantin taps are tinged wi' goud, on yon burn side,
And gloamin' draws her foggy shroud o'er yon burn side;
Far frae the noisy scene,
I'll through the fields alane,
There we'll meet, my ain dear Jean, down by yon burn side.

XI.—O, ARE YE SLEEPING, MAGGIE?

O ARE ye sleepin', Maggie?
O, are ye sleepin', Maggie?
Let me in, for loud the linn
Is roaring o'er the warlock craigie!

Mirk and rainy is the night;
No a starn in a' the carry:
Lightnings gleam athwart the lift,
And winds drive wi' winter's fury.

Fearfu' soughs the bour-tree bank;
The rifted wood roars wild and drearie;
Loud the iron yett does clank;
And cry o' howlets mak's me eerie.

Aboon my breath I daurna speak,
For fear I raise your waukrife daddy;
Cauld's the blast upon my cheek:
O rise, rise, my bonnie lady!

She oped the door; she let him in:
He cuist aside his dreepin' plaidie;
Blaw your warst, ye rain and win',
Since, Maggie, now I'm in aside ye!

Now, since ye're wakin', Maggie,
Now, since ye're wakin', Maggie,
What care I for howlet's cry,
For bour-tree bank and warlock craigie?

Walter Savage Landor.

1775—1864.

Walter Savage Landor was born at Warwick, on January 30th, 1775, and was sprung of a family which had long been one of the best in Staffordshire. His father, Dr. Landor, had married a second wife, a Miss Elizabeth Savage, and Walter Savage Landor was the eldest of her three sons. Upon him were entailed her own estate, amounting to about £80,000, and Dr. Landor's property in Staffordshire. In his fifth year he was sent to a school at Knowles, and, in his tenth, to Rugby, where he distinguished himself as one of the best Latin scholars. As a boy he was an eager reader, and showed, moreover, a wonderful love for trees and flowers and brooks. In his sixteenth year he quarrelled with his master (whom he proved to have erred in regard to a Latin quantity), and had to leave Rugby in consequence. At the age of eighteen he went up to Trinity College, Oxford, where his talents were at once recognised, but where he would not compete for any University distinction. He became notorious as a "mad Jacobin," and was rusticated for having sent a charge of shot through the window of another undergraduate. Having quarrelled with his father, he went up to London on an allowance of £150 a year; studied French and Italian; and in 1795 published "The Poems of Walter Savage Landor," a volume of conventional

verses, written mainly in the rhymed heroic couplet. For three years he lived in South Wales, spending most of his time in wandering:—

> "One servant and one chest of books
> Follow'd me into mountain nooks,
> Where, sheltered from the sun and breeze,
> Lay Pindar and Thucydides."

His heart at this time had many queens, of whom two had a longer sovereignty than the others—the Ionè (whose real name was Nancy Jones), and the Ianthè (Sophia Jane Swift, afterwards Countess de Molendé), familiar to every reader of his poems. At Tenby he met Rose Aylmer, the girl whose death forms the subject of the most beautiful of all his lyrics:—

> "Ah what avails the sceptred race,
> Ah, what the form divine!
> What every virtue, every grace!
> Rose Aylmer, all were thine.
> Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
> May weep, but never see,
> A night of memories and of sighs,
> I consecrate to thee."

She lent him a book containing an Arabian story, out of which he constructed the miniature epic, "Gebir"—a poem which found hardly a reader. But Southey admired it fervently, and De Quincey (another Gebir-ite) used to aver that for a time he had flattered himself with the idea that he was the only man in the world who had read the poem. In 1800 Landor published "Poems from the Arabic and the Persian," a book of original verses, followed in 1802 by "Poetry by the Author of Gebir;" neither volume having the scantiest success. Dr. Landor died in 1805, and Walter came into his kingdom. After squandering money at Bath, visiting Spain, and getting (of course)

embroiled with the authorities, he purchased the estate of Llanthony on the Welsh marches, and married Julia Thuillier, for the cogent reason that she had more curls on her head than any other girl in Bath. She was sixteen years younger than himself; she had no sympathy with his literary ambitions; and their life together was one of almost perpetual discord. At Llanthony he spent his time in an incessant war with his neighbours and his tenants; his schemes for beautifying the property and elevating the peasants broke down utterly; lawsuit followed upon lawsuit; and in five years he had flung away £70,000. Broken in fortune, he travelled through France to Italy; lived first at Como, and then at Pisa, and finally settled in Florence. There he remained for eight years, and there he wrote his "Imaginary Conversations." The different volumes of the great book appeared between 1824 and 1829. They were ardently welcomed by men of letters, and a few lovers of noble literature, but they acquired no wide circle of readers. In 1829 he removed to Fiesole, where his villa, to his intense delight, stood on the spot described as the Valley of the Ladies by his favourite author, Boccaccio. His "Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare" was published anonymously in 1834, and was followed by "Pericles and Aspasia," and the most charming of all his works, the "Pentameron."

The dissensions between him and his wife having grown intolerably embittered, he returned alone to England and settled at Bath in 1837. He became the close friend of Charles Dickens, who, in a spirit of half-loving, half-bantering humour, introduced him as Mr. Boythorn into "Bleak House,"—though

before he entered there he had to leave his learning and his style behind him—and of John Forster who was to be his loyal, if somewhat clumsy, biographer. At Bath he spent twenty years, writing several dramas (of which the best is "The Siege of Ancona") —the beautiful "Hellenics," "Last Fruit from an Old Tree," and "Dry Sticks fagoted by W. S. Landor."

In 1858 he returned to Fiesole. Even at the age of eighty-eight the noble "old Roman" as Carlyle, who admired him, termed him, could pen majestic sentences and chaste and vigorous verse,—witness his "Theseus and Hippolyta." His "Heroic Idylls" were issued in 1863. In 1864 his life was brightened by a visit from Mr. Swinburne:—

> "I came as one whose thoughts half linger,
> Half run before;
> The youngest to the oldest singer,
> That England bore."

In the same year, on September 17th, Landor died at Florence.

Landor was one of the most ardent, generous, courageous and loyal of men. He was also one of the most unpractical. "I never," he wrote, "did a wise thing in the course of my life." He was impulsive and turbulent and apt to give extravagant expression to his indignation at those whom he rightly or wrongly called his enemies. Nearly all his life long he was quarrelling with his fellows, and entangling himself in miserable squabbles. Only his magnificent energy could have enabled him to bear the losses and crosses he brought upon himself and to produce the work that he did. There is nothing mean or vindictive in his explosions of fury. When a lawyer had, as he believed, duped him, he

found solace in the reflection that he had gibbeted the rascal in his Latin verses. He bore himself proudly in his dealings with men, he made comments on his writings which had better have been left to be said by others, as for example: "I shall dine late, but the drawing-room will be well lighted, the guests few and select,"—or again, "What I wrote is not written on slate, and no finger, not even of Time himself, who dips it in the clouds of years, can efface it,"—or again,

> "For me, I write
> As others wrote on Sunium's height."

These are, perhaps, less the expressions of a lofty self-confidence, a serene egotism, than the words of a man secretly wincing at the failure of his writings to attain popularity. But he sums up his life work with admirable felicity and dignity in the noble quatrain which he penned in his extreme old age:—

> "I strove with none, for none was worth my strife,
> Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;
> I warmed both hands before the fire of life,
> It sinks, and I am ready to depart."

As an author Landor has been extolled in unmeasured terms by the most gifted of poets and critics, while the great body of readers has steadily ignored his work. Shelley and Wordsworth and Southey, Hazlitt and Lamb and De Quincey, Dickens, Carlyle, the Brownings and Swinburne, and Lowell, all have been more or less fervent Landorians. Lamb said of his "Citation of William Shakespeare" that only two men could have produced it,—he who wrote it, and he of whom it was written; Mrs. Browning found certain pages of "Pericles and Aspasia," too delicious to be turned over; De

Quincey asserted that Landor's Count Julian was a creation worthy to stand beside the Prometheus of Æschylus and the Satan of Milton : Carlyle said that one of his very latest dialogues was like the ringing of Roman swords upon helmets ; and Mr. Swinburne has lavished rapturous eulogy on his works. Mr. Colvin, in his masterly volume in the "English Men of Letters" series, has declared that "Gebir' contains passages which, for loftiness of thought and language will bear comparison to Milton. "There are lines too," he adds, "that for majesty of rhythm, may bear the same comparison ;" and elsewhere he asserts that Landor "imagines heights and delicacies" unmatched by any English writer except Shakespeare. Nevertheless, the public will have none of him; and despite the great names of his eulogists, there is a good deal to be said on behalf of the public. Landor's style is not seldom obscure through excessive condensation and abuse of metaphor. He appears to have considered that any commonplace cast into figurative form became a profound idea. His politics are as crude and as extravagant as the politics of Victor Hugo. He raged against kings and tyrants, like a youthful declaimer in a debating society. To him, as to Victor Hugo, a king is a kind of villain of melodrama. Perhaps no author ever wrote so beautifully and so frequently exhibited such slight originality of thought. Had he been a writer of the florid type, the disproportion of ideas to words would have been less notable. But Landor's prose at its best is so sound, so stately and austere, it seems passing strange to find this great master of language so often conveying so little. Never, surely, were platitudes

set forth in form of such sculptured dignity. Reading certain pages of Landor, says Mr. Leslie Stephen, is like gliding on ice over a chasm. All is smooth and polished to perfection, but there is no thought underlying the words. His style with all its vigour and finish is often somewhat cold and lacking in ease and charm. Again, he is apt, in his passion for concision, to vex his reader by his abrupt transitions. The sentences are not consecutive. They may be, they often are, of faultless mould, but they do not carry forward a narrative or an argument.

The drawbacks to his ever winning popularity are patent. But how vastly his merits outweigh his defects! When he is at his best, the grace, the vigour, the lucidity, the classical purity and stateliness of his style, the vividness, the precision, the delicate beauty of his imagery, are well-nigh matchless. He was a ripe scholar—a singularly accomplished Latinist—and much of his loveliest verse and noblest prose was devoted to the men and scenes of the classic world. His manner of dealing with these has been defined with faultless felicity by Mr. Swinburne:—

> "And through the trumpet of a child of Rome
> Rang the pure music of the flutes of Greece."

In the long series of "Imaginary Conversations," the bearers of the greatest names in the world's history are introduced with an audacity again and again justified by the splendour of the dialogue. You listen to Canning and Pitt, to Bossuet and Lucian and Plato and Diogenes, to Rhodope and Æsop and Epicurus and Leontium, to Lady Godiva and Joan of Arc, to Scipio and Marius and Lucullus,

and Cæsar and Hannibal—and to many another of the immortals. There are dialogues which are truly dramatic, full of character and the fire of passion; there are others in which the speakers are simply puppets, whose function is to serve as mouthpieces for the views of Walter Landor. Few books are more unequal. You pass from vapid and trite and pompous pages, to pages which are Attic in lucidity and grace and sweet sonority, or to others which may be justly described as Roman in their stern majesty of sentiment and monumental grandeur of diction. The best loved by Landor of all his "Conversations" was the exquisite dialogue in which Epicurus and Leontium and Ternissa take part. But the lovely Greek idyl, so instinct with the spirit of poetry, in which Thelymnia bears her with a witchery irresistible by man, is surely of a beauty as consummate.

"Pericles and Aspasia," with all its eloquence and tenderness, is much too long; and there, it must be admitted, Landor drones. But it would be hard to name a more delightful mingling of lofty dialogue and idyllicism than the "Pentameron." The sketches of Italian life are vivid and graceful and true; the talks between Petrarch and Boccaccio show Landor at his happiest as a master of dialogue; and there is deeper feeling in the book than in any other prose work by its author. Here there is no trace of the frigidity, the obscurity, the pompous nothings and the reckless dogmatism which deform a number of the "Imaginary Confessions." The book seems full of sunshine and fragrance; its pages are instinct with the charm of Italy. Its crowning beauty is the "Dream of Boccaccio." Mr. Colvin has done well in

pointing out how far that masterpiece of imaginative prose surpasses the over-rated "Suspiria de Profundis," of De Quincey. For chastity and melody of style, for delicate yet poignant sentiment, it stands alone in English prose literature. And the "Dream of Petrarch" is a hardly less perfect example of verbal art and moving sentiment.

In verse he ranged from the epigram to the idyl, from the lyric to the drama. As an epigrammatist he was frequently piquant and stinging—witness the lines upon Melville:—

"God's laws declare
Thou shalt not swear
By aught in heaven above or earth below.
'Upon my honour!' Melville cries,
He swears and lies.
Does Melville then break God's commandments? No."

Canning hardly penned lines more wittily caustic. He failed as a dramatist; he had no constructive power and his characters talk too much. "Count Julian," his first tragedy, so extravagantly over-praised by De Quincey, contains several superb passages of poetry, but as a drama, even as a closet drama, it is naught. "The Siege of Ancona," though it has not the lofty poetry of "Count Julian," is much better built, and moves more pleasantly than any other of Landor's plays.

"Gebir" is jewelled with lines that are faultless, alike in rounded beauty of expression and majesty of rhythm. Nevertheless, "Gebir" is not exactly easy reading. The plot is at once dull and fantastic; the story drags; the breath of life is not in the characters. It is in the "Hellenics" that Landor's loveliest work in verse—setting aside one

or two lyrics—is to be found. They have been compared to the idyls of André Chenier, but the comparison is hardly felicitous. There is far more abandonment, more variety of music and richness of colour in the work of the French poet than in Landor's verse. To some the English writer's idyls will always seem unduly cold and restrained, while others will ever recur to them, as to some cool and quiet resting-place where one may forget the fever and turmoil of the modern world. They bring across the years something of the charm of "old Ionia;" to read them is, as it were, to walk in the clear, soft light of the morning, and breathe a breath from the hills and seas of the early world. Finest of them all are the "Hamadryad," and the still lovelier lines on the death of Artemidora.

As a poet Landor cannot rank with the greatest men of his time; he cannot, one need hardly say, stand beside Shelley and Keats and Wordsworth and Byron, But he did a kind of work unlike the work of any of these, and he did it almost perfectly. From the writings of greater poets the finest spirits of their day, the deepest lovers of art, will again and again turn for change and refreshment to Landor's idyllic verse. He was himself aware that his greatest work was done in prose. And with all his defects, so towering is the excellence of his noblest passages, that it would be hard to name his superior as a master of style among the English prose writers of the century.

WALTER WHYTE.

GEBIR.

1798.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

TAMAR AND THE NYMPH.

(FROM BOOK I.)

"'Twas evening, though not sunset, and the tide
Level with these green meadows, seem'd yet higher:
'Twas pleasant; and I loosen'd from my neck
The pipe you gave me, and began to play
O that I ne'er had learnt the tuneful art!
It always brings us enemies or love.
Well, I was playing, when above the waves
Some swimmer's head methought I saw ascend;
I, sitting still, survey'd it, with my pipe
Awkwardly held before my lips half-closed,
Gebir! it was a Nymph! a Nymph divine!
I can not wait describing how she came,
How I was sitting, how she first assum'd
The sailor; of what happen'd there remains
Enough to say, and too much to forget.
The sweet deceiver stept upon this bank
Before I was aware; for with surprise
Moments fly rapid as with love itself.
Stooping to tune afresh the hoarsen'd reed,
I heard a rustling, and where that arose
My glance first lighted on her nimble feet.
Her feet resembled those long shells explored
By him who to befriend his steed's dim sight
Would blow the pungent powder in the eye.

Her eyes too! O immortal Gods! her eyes
Resembled—what could they resemble? what
Ever resemble those? Even her attire
Was not of wonted woof nor vulgar art:
Her mantle show'd the yellow samphire-pod,
Her girdle the dove-colour'd wave serene.
'Shepherd,' said she, 'and will you wrestle now,
And with the sailor's hardier race engage?'
I was rejoiced to hear it, and contrived
How to keep up contention: could I fail
By pressing not too strongly, yet to press?
'Whether a shepherd, as indeed you seem,
Or whether of the hardier race you boast,
I am not daunted; no; I will engage.'
'But first,' said she, 'what wager will you lay?'
'A sheep,' I answered: 'add whate'er you will.'
'I can not,' she replied, 'make that return:
Our hided vessels in their pitchy round
Seldom, unless from rapine, hold a sheep.
But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue
Within, and they that lustre have imbibed
In the sun's palace-porch, where when unyoked
His chariot-wheel stands midway in the wave:
Shake one and it awakens, then apply
Its polish'd lips to your attentive ear,
And it remembers its august abodes,
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.
And I have others given me by the nymphs,
Of sweeter sound than any pipe you have;
But we, by Neptune! for no pipe contend,
This time a sheep I win, a pipe the next.'
Now came she forward eager to engage,
But first her dress, her bosom then survey'd,
And heav'd it, doubting if she could deceive.

Her bosom seem'd, inclosed in haze like heav'n,
To baffle touch, and rose forth undefined:
Above her knee she drew the robe succinct,
Above her breast, and just below her arms.
'This will preserve my breath when tightly bound,
If struggle and equal strength should so constrain.'
Thus, pulling hard to fasten it, she spake,
And, rushing at me, closed: I thrill'd throughout
And seem'd to lessen and shrink up with cold.
Again with violent impulse gusht my blood,
And hearing nought external, thus absorb'd,
I heard it, rushing through each turbid vein,
Shake my unsteady swimming sight in air.
Yet with unyielding though uncertain arms
I clung around her neck; the vest beneath
Rustled against our slippery limbs entwined:
Often mine springing with eluded force
Started aside and trembled till replaced:
And when I most succeeded, as I thought,
My bosom and my throat felt so comprest
That life was almost quivering on my lips,
Yet nothing was there painful: these are signs
Of secret arts and not of human might;
What arts I can not tell; I only know
My eyes grew dizzy and my strength decay'd;
I was indeed o'ercome—with what regret,
And more, with what confusion, when I reach't
The fold, and yielding up the sheep, she cried,
'This pays a shepherd to a conquering maid.'
She smiled, and more of pleasure than disdain
Was in her dimpled chin and liberal lip,
And eyes that languisht, lengthening, just like love.
She went away; I on the wicker gate
Leant, and could follow with my eyes alone.

The sheep she carried easy as a cloak;
But when I heard its bleating, as I did,
And saw, she hastening on, its hinder feet
Struggle, and from her snowy shoulder slip,
One shoulder its poor efforts had unveil'd,
Then all my passions mingling fell in tears;
Restless then ran I to the highest ground
To watch her; she was gone; gone down the tide;
And the long moon-beam on the hard wet sand
Lay like a jasper column half uprear'd."

THE CITATION OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

1834.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

THE MAID'S LAMENT.

I LOVED him not; and yet now he is gone
I feel I am alone.
I check'd him while he spoke; yet could he speak,
Alas! I would not check.
For reasons not to love him once I sought,
And wearied all my thought
To vex myself and him: I now would give
My love, could he but live
Who lately lived for me, and when he found
'Twas vain, in holy ground
He hid his face amid the shades of death.
I waste for him my breath
Who wasted his for me: but mine returns,
And this lorn bosom burns
With stifling heat, heaving it up in sleep,
And waking me to weep
Tears that had melted his soft heart: for years
Wept he as bitter tears.
"Merciful God!" such was his latest prayer,
"These may she never share!"
Quieter is his breath, his breast more cold,
Than daisies in the mould,
Where children spell, athwart the churchyard gate,
His name and life's brief date.
Pray for him, gentle souls, whoe'er you be,
And oh! pray too for me.

PERICLES AND ASPASIA.

1836.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

THE DEATH OF ARTEMIDORA.

(FROM LXXXV. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.)

"We are losing, day by day, one friend or other. Artemidora of Ephesus, was betrothed to Elpenor, and their nuptials, it was believed, were at hand. How gladly would Artemidora have survived Elpenor. I pitied her almost as much as if she had. I must ever love true lovers on the eve of separation."

"ARTEMIDORA! Gods invisible,
While thou art lying faint along the couch,
Have tied the sandal to thy veinèd feet,
And stand beside thee, ready to convey
Thy weary steps where other rivers flow.
Refreshing shades will waft thy weariness
Away, and voices like thine own come nigh,
Soliciting, nor vainly, thy embrace."
Artemidora sigh'd, and would have press'd
The hand now pressing hers, but was too weak.
Fate's shears were over her dark hair unseen
While thus Elpenor spake: he look'd into
Eyes that had given light and life erewhile
To those above them, those now dim with tears
And watchfulness. Again he spake of joy
Eternal. At that word, that sad word, *joy*,
Faithful and fond her bosom heav'd once more,
Her head fell back: one sob, one loud deep sob
Swell'd thro' the darken'd chamber; 'twas not hers:
With her that old boat, incorruptible,
Unwearied, undiverted in its course,
Had plash'd the water up the farther strand.

THE PENTAMERON.

1836-7.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

TO MY CHILD CARLINO.

(FROM THE "FIFTH DAY'S INTERVIEW.")

CARLINO! what art thou about, my boy?
Often I ask that question, though in vain,
For we are far apart: ah! therefore 'tis
I often ask it; not in such a tone
As wiser fathers do, who know too well.
Were we not children, you and I together?
Stole we not glances from each other's eyes?
Swore we not secrecy in such misdeeds?
Well could we trust each other. Tell me then
What thou art doing. Carving out thy name,
Or haply mine, upon my favourite seat,
With the new knife I sent thee over sea?
Or hast thou broken it, and hid the hilt
Among the myrtles, starr'd with flowers, behind?
Or under that high throne whence fifty lilies
(With sworded tuberoses dense around)
Lift up their heads at once, not without fear
That they were looking at thee all the while.
Does Cincirillo follow thee about?
Inverting one swart foot suspensively,
And wagging his dread jaw at every chirp
Of bird above him on the olive-branch?
Frighten him then away! 'twas he who slew
Our pigeons, our white pigeons peacock-tailed
That fear'd not you and me—alas, nor him!

I flattened his striped sides along my knee,
And reasoned with him on his bloody mind,
Till he looked blandly, and half-closed his eyes
To ponder on my lecture in the shade.
I doubt his memory much, his heart a little,
And in some minor matters (may I say it ?)
Could wish him rather sager. But from thee
God hold back wisdom yet for many years!
Whether in early season or in late
It always comes high-priced. For thy pure breast
I have no lesson ; it for me has many.
Come throw it open then! What sports, what cares
(Since there are none too young for these) engage
Thy busy thoughts ? Are you again at work,
Walter and you, with those sly labourers,
Geppo, Giovanni, Cecco, and Poeta,
To build more solidly your broken dam
Among the poplars, whence the nightingale
Inquisitively watch'd you all day long ?
I was not of your council in the scheme,
Or might have saved you silver without end,
And sighs too without number. Art thou gone
Below the mulberry, where that cold pool
Urged to devise a warmer, and more fit
For mighty swimmers, swimming three abreast ?
Or art thou panting in this summer noon
Upon the lowest step before the hall,
Drawing a slice of watermelon, long
As Cupid's bow, athwart thy wetted lips
(Like one who plays Pan's pipe) and letting drop
The sable seeds from all their separate cells,
And leaving bays profound and rocks abrupt,
Redder than coral round Calypso's cave.

HELLENICS.

1847.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

I.

THE HAMADRYAD.

(VIII.)

Rhaicos was born amid the hills wherefrom
Gnidos the light of Caria is discern'd,
And small are the white-crested that play near,
And smaller onward are the purple waves.
Thence festal choirs were visible, all crown'd
With rose and myrtle if they were inborn ;
If from Pandion sprang they, on the coast
Where stern Athenè rais'd her citadel,
Then olive was entwined with violets
Cluster'd in bosses, regular and large.
For various men wore various coronals,
But one was their devotion : 'twas to her
Whose laws all follow, her whose smile withdraws
The sword from Ares, thunderbolt from Zeus,
And whom in his chill caves the mutable
Of mind, Poseidon, the sea-king, reveres,
And whom his brother, stubborn Dis, hath pray'd
To turn in pity the averted cheek
Of her he bore away, with promises,
Nay, with loud oath before dread Styx itself,
To give her daily more and sweeter flowers
Than he made drop from her on Enna's dell.
Rhaicos was looking from his father's door
At the long trains that hastened to the town
From all the valleys, like bright rivulets

Gurgling with gladness, wave outrunning wave,
And thought it hard he might not also go
And offer up one prayer, and press one hand,
He knew not whose. The father call'd him in,
And said, "Son Rhaicos! those are idle games;
Long enough I have lived to find them so."
And ere he ended, sigh'd; as old men do
Always, to think how idle such games are.
"I have not yet," thought Rhaicos in his heart,
And wanted proof.
"Suppose thou go and help
Echeion at the hill, to bark yon oak
And lop his branches off, before we delve
About the trunk and ply the root with axe:
This we may do in winter."
Rhaicos went;
For thence he could see farther, and see more
Of those who hurried to the city-gate.
Echeion he found there, with naked arm
Swart-hair'd, strong-sinew'd, and his eyes intent
Upon the place where first the axe should fall:
He held it upright. "There are bees about,
Or wasps, or hornets," said the cautious eld,
"Look sharp, O son of Thallinos!" The youth
Inclined his ear, afar, and warily,
And cavern'd in his hand. He heard a buzz
At first, and then the sound grew soft and clear,
And then divided into what seem'd tune,
And there were words upon it, plaintive words.
He turn'd, and said, "Echeion! do not strike
That tree: it must be hollow; for some God
Speaks from within. Come thyself near." Again
Both turn'd toward it: and behold! there sat
Upon the moss below, with her two palms

Pressing it on each side, a maid in form.
Downcast were her long eyelashes, and pale
Her cheek, but never mountain-ash display'd
Berries of colour like her lip so pure,
Nor were the anemones about her hair
Soft, smooth, and wavering, like the face beneath.
"What dost thou here?" Echeion, half-afraid,
Half-angry, cried. She lifted up her eyes,
But nothing spake she. Rhaicos drew one step
Backward, for fear came likewise over him,
But not such fear: he panted, gaspt, drew in
His breath, and would have turn'd it into words,
But could not into one.
"O send away
That sad old man!" said she. The old man went
Without a warning from his master's son,
Glad to escape, for sorely he now fear'd,
And the axe shone behind him in their eyes.
Hamadryad. And wouldst thou too shed the most innocent
Of blood? No vow demands it; no God wills
The oak to bleed.
Rhaicos. Who art thou? whence? why here?
And whither wouldst thou go? Among the robed
In white or saffron, or the hue that most
Resembles dawn or the clear sky, is none
Array'd as thou art. What so beautiful
As that gray robe which clings about thee close,
Like moss to stones adhering, leaves to trees,
Yet lets thy bosom rise and fall in turn,
As, toucht by zephyrs, fall and rise the boughs
Of graceful platan by the river-side.
Hamad. Lovest thou well thy father's house?
Rhaicos. Indeed
I love it, well I love it, yet would leave

For thine, where'er it be, my father's house,
With all the marks upon the door, that show
My growth at every birthday since the third,
And all the charms, o'erpowering evil eyes,
My mother nail'd for me against my bed,
And the Cydonian bow (which thou shalt see)
Won in my race last spring from Eutychos.

Hamad. Bethink thee what it is to leave a home
Thou never yet hast left, one night, one day.

Rhaicos. No, 'tis not hard to leave it; 'tis not hard
To leave, O maiden, that paternal home,
If there be one on earth whom we may love
First, last, for ever; one who says that she
Will love for ever too. To say which word,
Only to say it, surely is enough.—
It shows such kindness—if 'twere possible
We at the moment think she would indeed.

Hamad. Who taught thee all this folly at thy age?

Rhaicos. I have seen lovers and have learnt to love.

Hamad. But wilt thou spare the tree?

Rhaicos. My father wants
The bark; the tree may hold its place awhile.

Hamad. Awhile! thy father numbers then my days?

Rhaicos. Are there no others where the moss beneath
Is quite as tufty? Who would send thee forth
Or ask thee why thou tarriest? Is thy flock
Anywhere near?

Hamad. I have no flock: I kill
Nothing that breathes, that stirs, that feels the air,
The sun, the dew. Why should the beautiful
(And thou art beautiful) disturb the source
Whence springs all beauty? Hast thou never heard

Of Hamadryads ?

Rhaicos. Heard of them I have :
Tell me some tale about them. May I sit
Beside thy feet ? Art thou not tired ? The herbs
Are very soft ; I will not come too nigh ;
Do but sit there, nor tremble so, nor doubt.
Stay, stay an instant : let me first explore
If any acorn of last year be left
Within it ; thy thin robe too ill protects
Thy dainty limbs against the harm one small
Acorn may do. Here's none. Another day
Trust me ; till then let me sit opposite.

Hamad. I seat me ; be thou seated, and content.

Rhaicos. O sight for gods ! Ye men below ! adore
The Aphroditè. *Is* she there below ?
Or sits she here before me ? as she sate
Before the shepherd on those heights that shade
The Hellespont, and brought his kindred woe.

Hamad. Reverence the higher Powers ; nor deem an iss
Of her who pleads to thee, and would repay—
Ask not how much—but very much. Rise not :
No, Rhaicos, no ! Without the nuptial vow
Love is unholy. Swear to me that none
Of mortal maids shall ever taste thy kiss,
Then take thou mine ; then take it, not before.

Rhaicos. Hearken, all gods above ! O Aphroditè.
O Herè ! let my vow be ratified !
But wilt thou come into my father's house ?

Hamad. Nay : and of mine I can not give thee part.

Rhaicos. Where is it ?

Hamad. In this oak.

Rhaicos. Ay ; now begins
The tale of Hamadryad : tell it through.

Hamad. Pray of thy father never to cut down

My tree; and promise him, as well thou mayst,
That every year he shall receive from me
More honey than will buy him nine fat sheep,
More wax than he will burn to all the gods.
Why fallest thou upon thy face? Some thorn
May scratch it, rash young man! Rise up; for shame!
Rhaicos. For shame I can not rise. O pity me!
I dare not sue for love—but do not hate!
Let me once more behold thee—not once more,
But many days: let me love on—unloved!
I aimed too high: on my own head the bolt
Falls back, and pierces to the very brain.
Hamad. Go—rather go, than make me say I love.
Rhaicos. If happiness is immortality,
(And whence enjoy it else the gods above?)
I am immortal too: my vow is heard:
Hark! on the left—Nay, turn not from me now,
I claim my kiss.
Hamad. Do men take first, then claim?
Do thus the seasons run their course with them?

—Her lips were seal'd; her head sank on his breast.
'Tis said that laughs were heard within the wood:
But who should hear them? and whose laughs? and why?

Savoury was the smell and long past noon,
Thallinos! in thy house; for marjoram,
Basil and mint, and thyme and rosemary,
Were sprinkled on the kid's well-roasted length,
Awaiting Rhaicos. Home he came at last,
Not hungry, but pretending hunger keen,
With head and eyes just o'er the maple plate.
"Thou seest but badly, coming from the sun,
Boy Rhaicos!" said the father. "That oak's bark

Must have been tough, with little sap between;
It ought to run; but it and I are old."
Rhaicos, although each morsel of the bread
Increast by chewing, and the meat grew cold
And tasteless to his palate, took a draught
Of gold-bright wine, which, thirsty as he was,
He thought not of, until his father fill'd
The cup, averring water was amiss,
But wine had been at all times pour'd on kid.
It was religion.
He thus fortified
Said, not quite boldly, and not quite abasht,
"Father, that oak is Zeus's own; that oak
Year after year will bring thee wealth from wax
And honey. There is one who fears the gods
And the gods love—that one"
(He blusht, nor said
What one)
"Has promist this, and may do more.
We have not many moons to wait until
The bees have done their best: if then there come
Nor wax nor honey, let the tree be hewn."
"Zeus hath bestow'd on thee a prudent mind,"
Said the glad sire: "but look thou often there,
And gather all the honey thou canst find
In every crevice, over and above
What has been promist; would they reckon that?"
Rhaicos went daily; but the nymph as oft
Invisible. To play at love, she knew,
Stopping its breathings when it breathes most soft,
Is sweeter than to play on any pipe.
She play'd on his: she fed upon his sighs;
They pleased her when they gently waved her hair,
Cooling the pulses of her purple veins,

And when her absence brought them out, they pleas'd.
Even among the fondest of them all,
What mortal or immortal maid is more
Content with giving happiness than pain?
One day he was returning from the wood
Despondently. She pitied him, and said
"Come back!" and twined her fingers in the hem
Above his shoulder. Then she led his steps
To a cool rill that ran o'er level sand
Through lentisk and through oleander, there
Bathed she his feet, lifting them on her lap
When bathed, and drying them in both her hands.
He dared complain; for those who most are loved
Most dare it; but not harsh was his complaint.
"O thou inconstant!" said he, "if stern law
Bind thee, or will, stronger than sternest law,
O, let me know henceforward when to hope
The fruit of love that grows for me but here."
He spake; and pluckt it from its pliant stem.
"Impatient Rhaicos! Why thus intercept
The answer I would give? There is a bee
Whom I have fed, a bee who knows my thoughts
And executes my wishes: I will send
That messenger. If ever thou art false,
Drawn by another, own it not, but drive
My bee away: then shall I know my fate,
And—for thou must be wretched—weep at thine.
But often as my heart persuades to lay
Its cares on thine and throb itself to rest,
Expect her with thee, whether it be morn
Or eve, at any time when woods are safe."

Day after day the Hours beheld them blest,
And season after season: years had past,

Blest were they still. He who asserts that Love
Ever is sated of sweet things, the same
Sweet things he fretted for in earlier days,
Never, by Zeus! loved he a Hamadryad.

The nights had now grown longer, and perhaps
The Hamadryads find them lone and dull
Among their woods; one did, alas! She called
Her faithful bee: 'twas when all bees should sleep,
And all did sleep but hers. She was sent forth
To bring that light which never wintry blast
Blows out, nor rain nor snow extinguishes,
The light that shines from loving eyes upon
Eyes that love back, till they can see no more.

Rhaicos was sitting at his father's hearth:
Between them stood the table, not o'erspread
With fruits which autumn now profusely bore,
Nor anise cakes, nor odorous wine; but there
The draft-board was expanded; at which game
Triumphant sat old Thallinos; the son
Was puzzled, vext, discomfited, distraught.
A buzz was at his ear: up went his hand,
And it was heard no longer. The poor bee
Return'd (but not until the morn shone bright)
And found the Hamadryad with her head
Upon her aching wrist, and show'd one wing
Half-broken off, the other's meshes marr'd,
And there were bruises which no eye could see
Saving a Hamadryad's.

At this sight
Down fell the languid brow, both hands fell down,
A shriek was carried to the ancient hall
Of Thallinos: he heard it not: his son
Heard it, and ran forthwith into the wood.

No bark was on the tree, no leaf was green,
The trunk was riven through. From that day forth
Nor word nor whisper sooth'd his ear, nor sound
Even of insect wing: but loud laments
The woodmen and the shepherds one long year
Heard day and night; for Rhaicos would not quit
The solitary place, but moan'd and died.

Hence milk and honey wonder not, O guest,
To find set duly on the hollow stone.

II.

ENALLOS AND CYMODAMEIA.

(x.)

A VISION came o'er three young men at once,
A vision of Apollo: each had heard
The same command; each followed it; all three
Assembled on one day before the God
In Lycia, where he gave his oracle.
Bright shone the morning; and the birds that build
Their nests beneath the column-heads of fanes
And eaves of humbler habitations, dropt
From under them and wheel'd athwart the sky,
When, silently and reverently, the youths
Marcht side by side up the long steps that led
Toward the awful God who dwelt within.
Of those three youths fame hath held fast the name
Of one alone; nor would that name survive
Unless Love had sustain'd it, and blown off
With his impatient breath the mists of time.
"Ye come," the God said mildly, "of one will
To people what is desert in the isle
Of Lemnos: but strong men possess its shores;
Nor shall you execute the brave emprise

Unless, on the third day from going forth,
To him who rules the waters ye devote
A virgin, cast into the sea alive."
They heard, and lookt in one another's face,
And then bent piously before the shrine
With prayer and praises and thanksgiving hymn,
And, after a short silence, went away,
Taking each other's hand and swearing truth,
Then to the ship in which they came, return'd.
Two of the youths were joyous, one was sad;
Sad was Enallos; yet those two by none
Were loved; Enallos had already won
Cymodameia, and the torch was near.
By night, by day, in company, alone,
The image of the maiden fill'd his breast
To the heart's brim. Ah! therefore did that heart
So sink within him.
They have sail'd; they reach
Their home again. Sires, matrons, maidens, throng
The plashing port, to watch the gather'd sail,
And who springs first and farthest upon shore.
Enallos came the latest from the deck.
Swift ran the rumour what the God had said,
And fearful were the maidens, who before
Had urged the sailing of the youths they loved,
That they might give their hands, and have their homes,
And nurse their children; and more thoughts perhaps
Led up to these, and even ran before.
But they persuaded easily their wooers
To sail without them, and return again
When they had seized the virgin on the way.
Cymodameia dreamt three nights, the three
Before their fresh departure, that her own
Enallos had been cast into the deep,

And she had saved him.
She alone embarkt
Of all the maidens, and unseen by all,
And hid herself before the break of day
Among the cloaks and fruits piled high aboard.
But when the noon was come, and the repast
Was call'd for, there they found her; and they call'd
Enallos: when Enallos lookt upon her,
Forebodings shook him: hopes rais'd *her*, and love
Warm'd the clear cheek while she wiped off the spray.
Kindly were all to her and dutiful;
And she slept soundly mid the leaves of fig
And vine, and far as far could be apart.
Now the third morn had risen, and the day
Was dark, and gusts of wind and hail and fogs
Perplex'd them: land they saw not yet, nor knew
Where land was lying. Sudden lightnings blazed,
Thunder-claps rattled round them. The pale crew
Howl'd for the victim. "Seize her, or we sink."
O maid of Pindus! I would linger here
To lave my eyelids at the nearest rill,
For thou hast made me weep, as oft thou hast,
Where thou and I, apart from living men,
And two or three crags higher, sate and sang.
Ah! must I, seeing ill my way, proceed?
And thy voice too, Cymodameia! thine
Comes back upon me, helpless as thyself
In this extremity. Sad words! sad words!
"O save me! save! Let me not die so young!
Loving thee so! Let me not cease to see thee!"
Thus prayed Cymodameia.
Thus prayed he:
"O God! who givest light to all the world,
Take not from me what makes that light most blest!

Grant me, if 'tis forbidden me to save
This hapless helpless sea-devoted maid,
To share with her (and bring no curses up
From outraged Neptune) her appointed fate!"
They wrung her from his knee; they hurl'd her down
(Clinging in vain at the hard slippery pitch)
Into the whitening wave. But her long hair
Scarcely had risen up again before
Another plunge was heard, another form
Clove the straight line of bubbling foam, direct
As ringdove after ringdove. Groans from all
Burst, for the roaring sea engulpht them both.
Onward the vessel flew; the skies again
Shone bright, and thunder roll'd along, not wroth,
But gently murmuring to the white-wing'd sails.
Lemnos at close of evening was in sight.
The shore was won; the fields markt out; and roofs
Collected the dun wings that seek house-fare;
And presently the ruddy-bosom'd guest
Of winter, knew the doors: then infant cries
Were heard within; and lastly tottering steps
Pattered along the image-station'd hall.
Ay, three full years had come and gone again,
And often, when the flame on windy nights
Suddenly flicker'd from the mountain-ash
Piled high, men pusht almost from under them
The bench on which they talkt about the dead.
Meanwhile beneficent Apollo saw
With his bright eyes into the sea's calm depth,
And there he saw Enallos, there he saw
Cymodameia. Gravely-gladsome light
Environed them with its eternal green,
And many nymphs sate round; one blew aloud
The spiral shell; one drew bright chords across

Shell more expansive ; tenderly a third
With cowering lip hung o'er the flute, and stopt
At will its dulcet sob, or waked to joy ;
A fourth took up the lyre and pincht the strings,
Invisible by trembling : many rais'd
Clear voices. Thus they spent their happy hours.
I know them all ; but all with eyes downcast,
Conscious of loving, have entreated me
I would not utter now their names above.
Behold, among these natives of the sea
There stands but one young man : how fair ! how fond !
Ah ! were he fond to *them !* It may not be !
Yet did they tend him morn and eve ; by night
They also watcht his slumbers : then they heard
His sighs, nor his alone ; for there were two
To whom the watch was hateful. In despair
Upward he rais'd his arms, and thus he prayed.
"O Phœbus ! on the higher world alone
Showerest thou all thy blessings ? Great indeed
Hath been thy favour to me, great to her ;
But she pines inly, and calls beautiful
More than herself the Nymphs she sees around,
And asks me, 'Are they not more beautiful ?'
Be all more beautiful, be all more blest,
But not with me ! Release her from the sight ;
Restore her to a happier home, and dry
With thy pure beams, above, her bitter tears !"

She saw him in the action of his prayer,
Troubled, and ran to soothe him. From the ground
Ere she had claspt his neck, her feet were borne.
He caught her robe ; and its white radiance rose
Rapidly, all day long, through the green sea.
Enallos locst not from that robe his grasp.

But spann'd one ankle too. The swift ascent
Had stunn'd them into slumber, sweet, serene,
Invigorating her, nor letting loose
The lover's arm below; albeit at last
It closed those eyes intensely fixt thereon,
And still as fixt in dreaming. Both were cast
Upon an island till'd by peaceful men
And few (no port nor road accessible)
Fruitful and green as the abode they left,
And warm with summer, warm with love and song.

'Tis said that some whom most Apollo loves
Have seen that island guided by his light;
And others have gone near it, but a fog
Rose up between them and the lofty rocks;
Yet they relate they saw it quite as well,
And shepherd-boys and pious hinds believe.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

Collected 1846.

I.

PERSONAL.

(CXI.)

1. On the Death of Southey.

Not the last struggles of the Sun,
Precipitated from his golden throne,
Hold darkling mortals in sublime suspense;
But the calm exod of a man
Nearer, tho' far above, who ran
The race we run, when Heaven recalls him hence.
Thus, O thou pure of earthly taint!
Thus, O my Southey! poet, sage, and saint!
Thou, after saddest silence, art removed.
What voice in anguish can we raise,
Or would we? Need we, dare we, praise?
God now does that, the God thy whole heart loved.

(CCCXII.)

2. To Robert Browning.

There is delight in singing, tho' none hear
Beside the singer; and there is delight
In praising, though the praiser sit alone
And see the prais'd far off him, far above.
Shakspeare is not our poet, but the world's,
Therefore on him no speech! and brief for thee,
Browning! Since Chaucer was alive and hale,
No man hath walkt along our roads with step
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue
So varied in discourse. But warmer climes
Give brighter plumage, stronger wing: the breeze
Of Alpine heights thou playest with, borne on
Beyond Sorrento and Amalfi, where
The Siren waits thee, singing song for song.

II.

LYRICS AND EPIGRAMS.

(VIII.)

DARLING shell, where hast thou been,
West or East? or heard or seen?
From what pastimes art thou come?
Can we make amends at home?

Whether thou hast tuned the dance
To the maids of ocean
Know I not; but Ignorance
Never hurts Devotion.

This I know, Ianthe's shell,
I must ever love thee well,
Tho' too little to resound
While the Nereids dance around;

For, of all the shells that are,
Thou art sure the brightest;
Thou, Ianthe's infant care,
Most these eyes delightest.

To thy early aid she owes
Teeth like budding snow-drop rows:
And what other shell can say
On her bosom once it lay?

That which into Cyprus bore
Venus from her native sea,
(Pride of Shells!) was never more
Dear to her than thou to me.

(IX.)

Away my verse; and never fear,
As men before such beauty do;
On you she will not look severe,
She will not turn her eyes from you.
Some happier graces could I lend
That in her memory you should live,
Some little blemishes might blend,
For it would please her to forgive.

(X).

Pleasure! why thus desert the heart
In its spring-tide?
I could have seen her, I could part,
And but have sigh'd!

O'er every youthful charm to stray,
To gaze, to touch—
Pleasure! why take so much away,
Or give so much!

(XII).

Lie, my fond heart, at rest,
She never can be ours.
Why strike upon my breast
The slowly passing hours?
Ah! breathe not out the name!
That fatal folly stay!
Conceal the eternal flame,
And tortured ne'er betray.

(XXII.)

It often comes into my head
That we may dream when we are dead,
But I am far from sure we do.
O that it were so! then my rest
Would be indeed among the blest;
I should for ever dream of you.

(XXVI.)

Ianthe! you are call'd to cross the sea!
A path forbidden *me!*
Remember, while the Sun his blessing sheds
Upon the mountain-heads,
How often we have watch'd him laying down
His brow, and dropp'd our own
Against each other's, and how faint and short
And sliding the support!
What will succeed it now? Mine is unblest,
Ianthe! nor will rest
But on the very thought that swells with pain.
O bid me hope again!
O give me back what Earth, what (without you)
Not Heaven itself can do,
One of the golden days that we have past;
And let it be my last!
Or else the gift would be, however sweet,
Fragile and incomplete.

(XXXII.)

There are some tears we would not wish to dry,
And some that sting before they drop and die.
Ah! well may be imagined of the two
Which I would ask of Heaven may fall from you.
Such, ere the lover sinks into the friend,
On meeting cheeks in warm attraction blend.

(LVIII).

Twenty years hence my eyes may grow
If not quite dim, yet rather so,
Still yours from others they shall know
Twenty years hence.

Twenty years hence, tho' it may hap
That I be call'd to take a nap
In the cool cell where thunder-clap
Was never heard.

There breathe but o'er my arch of grass
A not too sadly sigh'd *Alas*,
And I shall catch, ere you can pass,
That wingèd word.

(LXVIII.)

You smiled, you spoke, and I believed,
By every word and smile deceived.
Another man would hope no more;
Nor hope I what I hoped before:
But let not this last wish be vain;
Deceive, deceive me once again!

(LXXIV.)

So late removed from him she swore,
With clasping arms and vows and tears,
In life and death she would adore,
While memory, fondness, bliss, endears.

Can she forswear? can she forget?
Strike, mighty Love! strike, Vengeance! Soft!
Conscience must come and bring regret—
These let her feel!—nor these too oft!

(LXXV.)

Mild is the parting year, and sweet
  The odour of the falling spray;
Life passes on more rudely fleet,
  And balmless is its closing day.
I wait its close, I court its gloom,
  But mourn that never must there fall
Or on my breast or on my tomb
  The tear that would have sooth'd it all.

(LXXVII.)

Thank Heaven, Ianthe, once again
  Our hands and ardent lips shall meet,
And Pleasure, to assert his reign,
  Scatters ten thousand kisses sweet:
Then cease repeating while you mourn,
"I wonder when he will return."

Ah wherefore should you so admire
  The flowing words that fill my song,
Why call them artless, yet require
  "Some promise from that tuneful tongue?"
I doubt if heaven itself could part
A tuneful tongue and tender heart.

(LXXXIX.)

In Clementina's artless mien
  Lucilla asks me what I see,
And are the roses of sixteen
    Enough for me?

Lucilla asks, if that be all,
  Have I not cull'd as sweet before:
Ah, yes, Lucilla! and their fall
    I still deplore.

I now behold another scene,
Where Pleasure beams with heaven's own light,
More pure, more constant, more serene,
And not less bright:

Faith, on whose breast the Loves repose,
Whose chain of flowers no force can sever,
And Modesty, who, when she goes,
Is gone for ever.

(CXXXIX.)

The burden of an ancient rhyme
Is "By the forelock seize on Time."
Time in some corner heard it said;
Pricking his ears, away he fled;
And, seeing me upon the road,
A hearty curse on me bestow'd.
"What if I do the same to thee?
How wouldst thou like it?" thunder'd he,
And without answer thereupon
Seizing *my* forelock—it was gone.

(CLXXXIII.)

"Do you remember me? or are you proud?"
Lightly advancing thro' her star-trimm'd crowd,
Ianthe said, and lookt into my eyes.
"A *yes*, a *yes* to both: for Memory
Where you but once have been must ever be,
And at your voice Pride from his throne must rise."

(CCXIII.)

The leaves are falling; so am I:
The few late flowers have moisture in the eye;
So have I too.
Scarcely on any bough is heard
Joyous, or even unjoyous, bird
The whole wood through.

Winter may come: he brings but nigher
His circle (yearly narrowing) to the fire
Where old friends meet:
Let him;—now heaven is overcast,
And spring and summer both are past,
And all things sweet.

(ccxiv.)

The day returns again
Which once with bitter pain,
And only once for years, we spent apart.
Believe me, on that day
God heard me duly pray
For all his blessings on thy gentle heart:
Of late a cloud o'ercast
Its current; that is past;
But think not it hung lightly on my breast:
Then, as my hours decline,
Still let thy starlight shine
Thro' my lone casement, till at last I rest.

(ccxv.)

The place where soon I think to lie,
In its old creviced nook hard by
Rears many a weed:
If parties bring you there, will you
Drop slily in a grain or two
Of wall-flower seed?
I shall not see it, and (too sure!)
I shall not ever hear that your
Light step was there;
But the rich odour some fine day
Will, what I cannot do, repay
That little care.

III.

THE LAST FRUIT OFF AN OLD TREE.

1853.

(XIV.)

Joy is the blossom, sorrow is the fruit,
Of human life; and worms are at the root.

(XV.)

"*Why do I smile?*" To hear you say
"*One month, and then the shortest day!*"
The shortest, whate'er month it be,
Is the bright day you pass with me.

(XXXIV.)

To his young Rose an old man said,
"You will be sweet when I am dead:
Where skies are brightest we shall meet,
And there will you be yet more sweet,
Leaving your wingèd company
To waste an idle thought on me."

(XCV.)

Death stands above me, whispering low
I know not what into my ear:
Of his strange language all I know
Is, there is not a word of fear.

(EPIGRAMS.)

(LXXX.)

There is a flower I wish to wear,
But not until first worn by you—
Hearts-ease—of all earth's flowers most rare;
Bring it; and bring enough for two.

IV.

DRY STICKS.

(VARIOUS.)

1858.

(III.)

UNDER the lindens lately sat
A couple, and no more, in chat;
I wondered what they would be at
Under the lindens.

I saw four eyes and four lips meet,
I heard the words "*How sweet! how sweet!*"
Had then the Faeries given a treat
Under the lindens?

I pondered long and could not tell
What dainty pleased them both so well:
Bees! bees! was it your hydromel
Under the lindens?

(XIII.)

Children, keep up that harmless play;
Your kindred angels plainly say,
By God's authority, ye may.

Be prompt His holy word to hear,
It teaches you to banish fear;
The lesson lies on all sides near.

Ten summers hence the sprightliest lad
In Nature's face will look more sad,
And ask where are those smiles she had.

Ere many days the last will close;—
Play on, play on; for then (who knows?)
You who play here may here repose.

V.

FINAL POEMS.

1863.

(LXVI.)

ON THE DEATH OF IANTHE.

I DARE not trust my pen, it trembles so,
It seems to feel a portion of my woe,
And makes me credulous that trees and stones
At mournful fates have utter'd mournful tones.
While I look back again on days long past
How gladly would I yours might be my last.
Sad our first severance was, but sadder this,
When death forbids one hour of mutual bliss

(LXXVII.)

To my ninth decade I have totter'd on,
And no soft arm bends now my steps to steady;
She, who once led me where she would, is gone,
So when he calls me, Death shall find me ready.

(CI.)

Well I remember how you smiled
To see me write your name upon
The soft sea-sand,—"O! what a child!
You think you're writing upon stone!"
I have since written what no tide
Shall ever wash away, what men
Unborn shall read o'er ocean wide
And find Ianthe's name again.

(CXXVIII.)

No truer word, save God's, was ever spoken,
Than that the largest heart is soonest broken.

Charles Lamb.

1775—1834.

The continued appreciation of the genius of Charles Lamb is a proof that he had more of the universal faculty than was suspected by his contemporaries, and that his quaint and peculiar humour, was, as he intended it should be, subservient to the deeper and more thoughtful suggestions which it was designed to illustrate. His readers discover that the quips and oddities with which at first sight he seems to turn from his subject, throw upon it vivid "side-lights," and that his flashes of subtle and original humour rather illuminate than obscure the more serious or pathetic sentiments of his poems. Lamb possessed the power of exquisite condensation and of that felicity of expression which conveys more in a parenthesis than a heavier writer could include in a solid page. He had a fine sense of what was due to the judgment and the imagination of the reader, and knew when to leave off. He wrote comparatively little. All his works may be contained in one goodly volume; but there is more significance in them than will be found in many heavy tomes of more uncompromising moralists.

It is of course true that his popularity rests more with his essays than with his poems, which form only the smaller portion of his writings, but

the same qualities which make his prose such delightful reading are found crystallised and perfected in his verse. His distinctive characteristic is quaint originality, coloured, but not formed by his keen appreciation of, and familiar acquaintance with, the works of our old poets and dramatists. He never has any tendency to fall into the manner of "the lake poets," though he was the intimate friend of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey. He was not insensible to the beauties of nature, or to the charm of fine scenery; but he was more at home amidst the world of books and the haunts of men. The quiet repose of his humble room in the Temple, alternating occasionally with the pleasure of the company of a few chosen friends, —a night at the play, the aspect of the multitudinous life of Fleet Street and the Strand, or a walk about Hampstead, Enfield, or the pastoral scenes of "Mackery End in Hertfordshire," sufficed him. His world was a small one in respect of geographical extent. It was concentrated as his work was, but like his work it was full of living interests. The circumstances of his life and the pathetic conditions of it account for his disposition, and for the tone of thought that pervades many of his poems; for the seriousness—the fits of deep depression, the indomitable perception of all that is ludicrous even amidst profound grief; the teeming gentle fancies, and wayward, almost fantastic imaginings: the physical weakness and social eccentricities, which were but accidents of one of the kindest hearts and the tenderest souls that ever existed.

Charles Lamb was born on the 10th of February, 1775, in the Temple, where his father was employed

as a clerk by one of the Benchers; who obtained for Charles a presentation to Christ's Hospital, which he entered when he was seven years old, completing his education there when he was fifteen. He was a studious, timid, and retiring boy, and he joined in few sports, and made few intimate friends. One of these few was Coleridge, who even in those early days gave ample promise of great attainments; and the friendship then formed continued in after years. The two descriptive essays, "Recollections of Christ's Hospital," which in a limited sense eulogises the foundation and the scheme of the school; and "Christ's Hospital, Five and Thirty Years Ago," in which "Elia" in 1820 gave his personal reminiscences, are remarkable examples of the subtle change of style and treatment which Lamb could affect. The description by "Elia," written after the "Recollections" had appeared, professes to be an answer to the "Eulogy" published in Mr. Lamb's works. It presents to the reader the other side of the shield, and introduces the truer picture of what the School was in 1782—1789, when the boys were under-fed, over-flogged, over-fagged, ill-treated, and neglected. Now that Christ's Hospital, or the Blue-Coat School, as it has existed in Newgate Street for so many years, will soon be no more than a name in the locality; these essays will be of still greater significance, as vivid records of a past age, and (happily) of a long past experience. On leaving school Charles obtained an appointment in the South Sea House, from which, through the influence of his patron, he went to the India House. He would have obtained an exhibition at school, admitting him to college, where he would have had to enter the Church, but his stammering speech

was an insuperable obstacle to such an avocation. His father having become an almost helpless invalid, mentally as well as physically afflicted, his mother was occupied in attending to him; and, as the family was in very straitened circumstances, their chief means of support was Charles' salary, and the money earned by the needlework of his sister Mary, who was ten years older than Charles, and had always been his faithful friend and loving companion. In these early days he had suffered from temporary mental disturbance, but had recovered; the disorder only leaving its evidences in after life by occasional fits of melancholy and depression; but when he was twenty-one years old a terrible blow fell upon the household. Mary Lamb, quiet, enduring, self-effacing, in a sudden fit of insanity, inflicted fatal injuries on the mother whom she loved, and had to be placed under restraint. Charles, who was distracted with grief and sorrow, found consolation in the kindly sympathy and religious sentiments of his friend Coleridge. Mary Lamb recovered, and Charles had already determined to devote himself to the care and protection of his sister. After their father's death they continued to live together. Mary Lamb was distinguished for quiet common-sense and a very decided literary faculty, which enabled her to help her brother, to write some very admirable verses of her own, and to contribute a considerable portion of the "Tales from Shakespeare," with which her name is so closely associated. But she was still subject to fits of mental aberration, and at such times was placed under kind and judicious care, by her brother. She knew when an accession of insanity was approaching; and the brother and

sister would walk across the fields from their lodgings at Islington, weeping together as they went, that Mary might be temporarily consigned to the asylum until her recovery, when she returned to him, who, with a quiet and almost unconscious heroism, had made her the first consideration of his life. There is reason to believe that he relinquished the hopes he had once entertained in a youthful attachment, but it is probable that apart from the duty of taking upon himself the charge of his sister, his apprehension that the malady from which she suffered might be hereditary, would have been to him an insurmountable barrier to marriage.

Though Charles Lamb lived principally in London or its suburbs, his habits were comparatively quiet and secluded. In their humble home he and his sister entertained many intimate and distinguished friends, including Coleridge, Wordsworth, Southey, Charles Lloyd, Godwin, Hazlitt, and Leigh Hunt, with the latter of whom Lamb had afterwards a close literary relation, contributing some of his best literary and dramatic criticisms to the *Examiner* and other papers, including the ever famous "Essays of Elia," to the *London Magazine*, and to the *Indicator*, which was also under Hunt's editorship.

Lamb's earliest dramatic work was a tragedy entitled "John Woodvil," published in 1802, which, with some of his later productions, shows how deeply he had been influenced by the style and manner of the early English poets; but it is to his earlier and to his later productions, his poems pure and simple, that we must go to see, as it were, the heart and character of "gentle-hearted Charles," as Coleridge called him. Some of the earlier, including "The

Grandame," "A Vision of Repentance," and "Old Familiar Faces," were written in 1796—1797, and published in a volume with poems by Coleridge. The lines "On an Infant dying as soon as born," refer to the brief existence of the first-born of his friend Tom Hood. In 1826, Charles Lamb retired from the India House with a pension sufficient for the maintenance of himself and his sister; and he added somewhat to his resources by his contributions to journalism and by his poems. He died at Edmonton, on the 27th of December, 1834, in consequence of a slight injury, caused by a fall over a stone as he was walking in the London Road. His sister survived him only a short time. As an original humourist he has never been surpassed, and this quality, no less than the depth of sensibility and pathetic power, in his poems attests that the mild jocularity of Wordsworth, who called him "Lamb, the frolic and the gentle," was not misplaced.

THOMAS ARCHER.

POEMS.

CHARLES LAMB.

I.— THE GRANDAME.

1797.

On the green hill top,
Hard by the house of prayer, a modest roof,
And not distinguish'd from its neighbour barn,
Save by a slender-tapering length of spire,
The Grandame sleeps: a plain stone barely tells
The name and date to the chance passenger.
For lowly born was she, and long had eat
Well-earn'd, the bread of service;—her's was else
A mounting spirit, one that entertain'd
Scorn of base action, deed dishonorable,
Or aught unseemly. I remember well
Her reverend image: I remember too,
With what a zeal she serv'd her Master's house;
And how the prattling tongue of garrulous age
Delighted to recount the oft-told tale
Or anecdote domestic. Wise she was,
And wond'rous skilled in genealogies,
And could in apt and voluble terms discourse
Of births, of titles, and alliances;
Of marriages, and intermarriages;
Relationships remote, or near of kin;
Of friends offended, family disgraced,
Maiden high born, but wayward, disobeying
Parental strict injunctions, and regardless

Of unmix'd blood, and ancestry remote,
Stooping to wed with one of low degree.
But these are not thy praises ; and I wrong
Thy honor'd memory, recording chiefly
Things light or trivial. Better 'twere to tell,
How with a nobler zeal and warmer love,
She serv'd her *heavenly Master.* I have seen
That reverend form bent down with age and pain,
And rankling malady : yet not for this
Ceas'd she to praise her Maker, or withdrew
Her trust from Him, her faith, and humble hope ;
So meekly had she learn'd to bear her cross ;
For she had studied patience in the school
Of Christ ; much comfort she had thence deriv'd,
And was a *follower* of the Nazarene.

II.—A VISION OF REPENTANCE.

1797.

I SAW a famous fountain in my dream,
Where shady pathways to a valley led;
A weeping willow lay upon that stream,
And all around the fountain brink were spread
Wide branching trees, with dark green leaf rich clad,
Forming a doubtful twilight desolate and sad.

The place was such, that whoso enter'd in,
Disrobèd was of every earthly thought,
And straight became as one that knew not sin,
Or to the world's first innocence was brought;
Enseem'd it now, he stood on holy ground,
In sweet and tender melancholy wrapt around.

A most strange calm stole o'er my soothèd sprite;
Long time I stood, and longer had I staid,
When lo! I saw, saw by the sweet moonlight,
Which came in silence o'er that silent shade,
Where near the fountain SOMETHING like DESPAIR
Made of that weeping willow garlands for her hair.

And eke with painful fingers she inwove
Many an uncouth stem of savage thorn—
"The willow garland, *that* was for her love,
And *these* her bleeding temples would adorn."
With sighs her heart nigh burst,—salt tears fast fell,
As mournfully she bended o'er that sacred well.

To whom when I addrest myself to speak,
She lifted up her eyes, and nothing said;
The delicate red came mantling o'er her cheek,
And, gathering up her loose attire, she fled
To the dark covert of that woody shade,
And in her goings seem'd a timid gentle maid.

Revolving in my mind what this should mean,
And why that lovely lady plainèd so;
Perplex'd in thought at that mysterious scene,
And doubting if 'twere best to stay or go,
I cast mine eyes in wistful gaze around,
When from the shades came slow a small and plaintive sound:

"Psyche am I, who love to dwell
In these brown shades, this woody dell,
Where never busy mortal came,
Till now, to pry upon my shame.

"At thy feet what thou dost see
The Waters of Repentance be,
Which, night and day, I must augment
With tears, like a true penitent,

"If haply so my day of grace
Be not yet past; and this lone place,
O'er-shadowy, dark, excludeth hence
All thoughts but grief and penitence."

"Why dost thou weep, thou gentle maid?
And wherefore in this barren shade
Thy hidden thoughts with sorrow feed?
Can thing so fair repentance need?"

"O! I have done a deed of shame,
And tainted is my virgin fame,
And stain'd the beauteous maiden white
In which my bridal robes were dight."

"*And who the promis'd spouse declare,*
And what those bridal garments were?"

"Severe and saintly righteousness
Compos'd the clear white bridal dress;
JESUS, the son of Heaven's high King,
Bought with His blood the marriage-ring.

"A wretched sinful creature, I
Deem'd lightly of that sacred tie,
Gave to a treacherous WORLD my heart,
And play'd the foolish wanton's part.

"Soon to these murky shades I came,
To hide from the Sun's light my shame.—
And still I haunt this woody dell,
And bathe me in that healing well,
Whose waters clear have influence
From sin's foul stains the soul to cleanse;
And night and day I them augment
With tears, like a true penitent,
Until, due expiation made,
And fit atonement fully paid,
The Lord and Bridegroom me present,
Where in sweet strains of high consent,
God's throne before, the Seraphim
Shall chaunt the ecstatic marriage hymn."

"*Now Christ restore thee soon*"—I said,
And thenceforth all my dream was fled.

III.—THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES.

January 1798.

WHERE are they gone, the old familiar faces?
I had a mother, but she died, and left me,
Died prematurely in a day of horrors—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I lov'd a love once, fairest among women;
Clos'd are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man.
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like, I pac'd round the haunts of my childhood.
Earth seem'd a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother!
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces.

For some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

IV.—HESTER.

1805.

WHEN maidens such as Hester die,
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try,
With vain endeavour.

A month or more hath she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed,
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate,
That flush'd her spirit.

I know not by what name beside
I shall it call:—if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied,
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool,
But she was train'd in Nature's school,
Nature had blest her.

A waking eye, a prying mind,
A heart that stirs is hard to bind,
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind,
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbour, gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet, as heretofore,
Some summer morning,

When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that would not go away,
A sweet forewarning?

V.—PARENTAL RECOLLECTIONS.

From "Poetry for Children," 1809.

A CHILD'S a plaything for an hour;
Its pretty tricks we try
For that or for a longer space;
Then tire, and lay it by.

But I knew one that to itself
All seasons could control;
That would have mocked the sense of pain
Out of a grieved soul.

Thou straggler into loving arms,
Young climber up of knees,
When I forget thy thousand ways
Then life and all shall cease.

VI.—HARMONY IN UNLIKENESS.

BY Enfield lanes, and Winchmore's verdant hill,
Two lovely damsels cheer my lonely walk:
The fair Maria, as a vestal, still;
And Emma brown, exuberant in talk.
With soft and lady speech the first applies
The mild correctives that to grace belong
To her redundant friend, who her defies
With jest, and mad discourse, and bursts of song.
O differing pair, yet sweetly thus agreeing,
What music from your happy discord rises,
While your companion hearing each, and seeing,
Nor this, nor that, but both together, prizes;
This lesson teaching, which our souls may strike,
That harmonies may be in things unlike!

VII.—WORK.

WHO first invented work, and bound the free
And holiday-rejoicing spirit down
To the ever-haunting importunity
Of business in the green fields, and the town—
To plough, loom, anvil, spade—and oh! most sad,
To that dry drudgery at the desk's dead wood?
Who but the Being unblest, alien from good,
Sabbathless Satan! he who his unglad
Task ever plies 'mid rotatory burnings,
That round and round incalculably reel—
For wrath divine hath made him like a wheel—
In that red realm from which are no returnings:
Where toiling, and turmoiling, ever and aye
He, and his thoughts, keep pensive working-day.

VIII.—ON AN INFANT DYING AS SOON AS BORN.

1828.

I SAW where in the shroud did lurk
A curious frame of Nature's work.
A flow'ret crushèd in the bud,
A nameless piece of Babyhood,
Was in a cradle-coffin lying;
Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying;
So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb
For darker closets of the tomb!
She did but ope an eye, and put
A clear beam forth, then straight up shut
For the long dark: ne'er more to see
Through glasses of mortality.
Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?
Shall we say, that Nature blind
Check'd her hand and changed her mind,
Just when she had exactly wrought
A finish'd pattern without fault?
Could she flag, or could she tire,
Or lack'd she the Promethean fire
(With her nine moons' long workings sicken'd)
That should thy little limbs have quicken'd?
Limbs so firm, they seem'd to assure
Life of health, and days mature:
Woman's self in miniature!
Limbs so fair they might supply
(Themselves now but cold imagery)
The sculptor to make Beauty by.
Or did the stern-eyed Fate descry
That babe or mother, one must die;

So in mercy left the stock,
And cut the branch; to save the shock
Of young years widow'd; and the pain,
When Single State comes back again
To the lone man who, 'reft of wife,
Thenceforward drags a maimèd life?
The economy of Heaven is dark;
And wisest clerks have miss'd the mark,
Why Human Buds, like this, should fall,
More brief than fly ephemeral,
That has his day; while shrivell'd crones
Stiffen with age to stocks and stones;
And crabbed use the conscience sears
In sinners of an hundred years.
Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss.
Rites, which custom does impose,
Silver bells and baby clothes;
Coral redder than those lips,
Which pale death did late eclipse;
Music framed for infant's glee,
Whistle never tuned for thee;
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,
Loving hearts were they which gave them.
Let not one be missing; nurse,
See them laid upon the hearse
Of infant slain by doom perverse.
Why should kings and nobles have
Pictured trophies to their grave;
And we, churls, to thee deny
Thy pretty toys with thee to lie,
A more harmless vanity?

IX.—IN MY OWN ALBUM.

FRESH clad from heaven in robes of white,
A young probationer of light,
Thou wert my soul, an Album bright,

A spotless leaf; but thought, and care,
And friend and foe, in foul or fair,
Have "written strange defeatures" there;

And Time with heaviest hand of all,
Like that fierce writing on the wall,
Hath stamp'd sad dates—he can't recall;

And error gilding worst designs—
Like speckled snake that strays and shines—
Betrays his path by crooked lines;

And vice hath left his ugly blot;
And good resolves, a moment hot,
Fairly began—but finish'd not;

And fruitless, late remorse doth trace—
Like Hebrew lore, a backward pace—
Her irrecoverable race.

Disjointed numbers; sense unknit;
Huge reams of folly, shreds of wit;
Compose the mingled mass of it.

My scalded eyes no longer brook
Upon this ink-blurred thing to look—
Go, shut the leaves, and clasp the book.

Thomas Campbell.

1777—1844.

THOMAS CAMPBELL, sometimes called the "Bard of Hope," was born on the 27th of July, 1777, in High Street, Glasgow, and was the eleventh and last olive branch to spring from the paternal stem.

His parents were endowed with excellent intellectual and moral qualities, and everything favoured the early and rapid development of the poet's mind. As a child he had a great fondness for songs and ballads, at ten years of age writing verses which evidenced facility in both rhyme and metre. At fourteen he entered Glasgow University, where he made great progress in classical studies. His translation of the "Clouds" of Aristophanes was declared by Professor Young to be the best exercise which had ever been given in by any student of the University.

It was while fulfilling the duties of a private tutor in the Highlands, that the idea of the "Pleasures of Hope" was suggested to him. Feeling dull in his solitude, he had asked his friend, Hamilton Paul, to send him some lines of friendly cheer. This Paul did in the form of a short poem on the "Pleasures of Solitude," saying, as he did so, "We have now *three* pleasures, by first-rate men of genius: the 'Pleasures of Imagination,' the 'Pleasures of Memory,' and the 'Pleasures of Solitude.' Let us cherish the 'Pleasures of Hope' that we may soon

meet again in old 'Alma Mater!'" The idea thus suggested took possession of the poet's mind, and held it until in due time it was brought forth.

In 1798 the poet was in Edinburgh, teaching Latin and Greek and seeking literary employment. "In this vocation," he says, "I made a comfortable livelihood, so long as I was industrious, but the 'Pleasures of Hope' came over me. I took long walks about Arthur's Seat, conning over my own (as I thought them) magnificent lines, and as my 'Pleasures of Hope' got on, my pupils fell off." The poem was published in the month of April, 1799, when the poet was only twenty-one years of age, and brought him about £50. It was an immediate and great success. Edition after edition was called for, and the poet received further sums for further editions. With the proceeds of his poem Campbell visited the Continent, crossing over to Hamburg and proceeding to Ratisbon, where he witnessed the taking of the town by the French.

At Hamburg he made the acquaintance of Anthony McCann, who was credited with being a leader of the Irish rebellion of 1798, and whose enforced absence from home suggested the poem "The Exile of Erin." Campbell settled at Altona for the winter, but the arrival of the British fleet in the Sound, in March, 1801, determined him to return home. Embarked on board a small trading vessel for Leith, he was chased by a Danish privateer, to escape which the captain sought shelter at Yarmouth, and the poet found his way to London. After a brief stay in the Metropolis, where he was welcomed in the best society, he returned to Edinburgh by sea. "A lady passenger by the same ship," he

writes in 1801, "who has read my poems, but was personally unacquainted with me, told me, to my utter astonishment, that I had been arrested in London for high treason, was confined to the Tower, and expected to be executed. I was equally unconscious of having either deserved or incurred such a sentence." On reaching Edinburgh he found that rumour had preceded him; his luggage was seized, and he had to submit to a strict examination before he could clear himself of the suspicion which his association with French officers and Irish refugees had involved him in.

The poet married his cousin, Matilda Sinclair, at St. Margaret's, Westminster, on September the 10th, 1803, and settled in Pimlico. A fine quarto edition of the "Pleasures of Hope," by which he made a large sum, was now published, and the poet was partially occupied by a regular engagement on the *Star* newspaper. Shortly afterwards he removed to Sydenham, where he lived for seventeen years. In 1805 he obtained a pension from the Government of £200 per annum, half of which he generously settled on his mother, who had now become a widow. In 1809 "Gertrude of Wyoming" appeared and became a great success, and in the following year the poet commenced a series of five lectures on poetry at the Royal Institution. In 1814 Campbell visited Paris, where he met Wellington, Humboldt, and Madame de Staël. In 1815 he had the good fortune to receive a legacy from a relative in recognition of his generous provision for his mother, and which, as he was also named residuary legatee, brought him over £4,000. "Specimens of the British Poets" was his next literary work, and was published in 1816,

after which, in 1820, he become editor of the *New Monthly Magazine*, for which he received £500 a year. It was in the pages of this work that "The Last Man" and others of his shorter poems appeared. After another visit to Germany, Campbell conceived the idea of founding the London University, which, furthered by Brougham, Hume, and others, was brought to issue in 1825. In 1824 "Theodoric" was published, but it fell flat after the more brilliant narrative poems of Scott and Byron, which had appeared since Campbell began to write. In 1826, defeating Sir Walter Scott, he was elected Lord Rector of Glasgow University, an honour which was repeated the two following years. Domestic troubles, however, dimmed the splendour of his success. His wife died (1828), and his only surviving son sank into a state of lunacy. He gave up the *New Monthly Magazine*, and, later, found relief from private sorrows in public labours on behalf of others. The capture of Warsaw, in 1831, and the distress of Poland fired him with indignant enthusiasm, and he espoused the Polish cause with the warmth that Byron showed for that of the aspiring Greeks.

The poet completed his life of Mrs. Siddons in 1833, and in 1834 visited France and went on to Algiers, where he found the materials for his volume published under the title "Letters from the South." In 1842 the "Pilgrim of Glencoe" appeared, but proved less successful than any of his previous works. In July 1843 he left England, and retired with his niece to Boulogne, where he died June 15th, 1844. The poet's remains were buried in Westminster Abbey, with every mark of honour and

respect, a guard of Polish exiles escorting his body to the grave, into which a handful of earth from the tomb of Kosciusko, the Polish hero, was thrown.

Few poets of the century have met with such immediate and complete recognition as fell to the lot of the "Bard of Hope." For a young man of twenty-one years of age to step at once into the front rank of living poets is phenomenal, though it must be admitted that in his day the course was tolerably clear. In 1798, the year of the "Lyrical Ballads," Samuel Rogers may be said to have stood alone in the front rank of popularity. Crabbe's "Village" had appeared in 1783; but except "The Newspaper," which was published in 1785, he had remained silent since. Blake was unknown, Wordsworth and Coleridge had not secured a following, Scott and Hogg had not yet spoken, and Southey had published nothing that had brought him fame. The "Pleasures of Memory," published in 1793, was, therefore, the foremost poem of the time; and the "Pleasures of Hope," which contains finer passages than can be found in the "Pleasures of Memory," probably secured some degree of vogue from the apparent sequential character of its idea and title. The poem suffers from the same defects in subject and form as does the model on which it was framed; and, like the model, has long ceased to hold the place of honour it so early and so easily won. With such subjects, and in such measure, it is so easy to prose and so difficult to avoid monotony, that it may be doubted whether any greater success than that actually achieved was, or is, open to the means employed.

In "Gertrude of Wyoming," the poet adopted a different measure, and with greater success. In

ninety-two Spenserean stanzas, divided into three parts, he tells a simple and pathetic story with true poetic power.

But it is by his shorter pieces that Campbell will retain his hold upon posterity. It is difficult to imagine a time in which human hearts will not thrill with patriotic ardour at the recital of "Hohenlinden," "Ye Mariners of England," and "The Battle of the Baltic," or throb with sympathy at the recital of "The Soldier's Dream," and the story of "Lord Ullin's Daughter." There are a lofty tone and rhythmic movement in these ballads which one would think could never fail to please. "The Last Man" is one of the grander of these shorter pieces, and well-nigh rises to the level of its sublime theme. "O'Connor's Child" is a more sustained effort, full of passion, pathos, and poetic fervour. Campbell was at his best when his heart was stirred by patriotic emotion or sympathy for the suffering and the oppressed. Had he written no more than this small group of poems, with "O'Connor's Child" for his longest effort, he would have written himself deep in human hearts, and therefore high in human estimation.

ALFRED H. MILES.

POEMS IN LYRICAL FORM.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

I.—YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND.

A Naval Ode.

1800.

I.

YE Mariners of England!
That guard our native seas;
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze!
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe!
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

II.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave!—
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave:
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell,
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long
And the stormy winds do blow.

III.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak,
She quells the floods below,—
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

IV.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart,
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean-warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

II.—HOHENLINDEN.

1800.

ON Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay th' untrodden snow;
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly:

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast array'd,
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neigh'd,
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills, with thunder riven,
Then rush'd the steed to battle driven,
And, louder than the bolts of heaven,
Far flash'd the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stainèd snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank, and fiery Hun,
Shout in their sulph'rous canopy.

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few, shall part where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

III.—LOCHIEL'S WARNING.

1803.

WIZARD—LOCHIEL.

WIZARD.

LOCHIEL, Lochiel! beware of the day
When the Lowlands shall meet thee in battle array!
For a field of the dead rushes red on my sight,
And the clans of Culloden are scatter'd in fight.
They rally, they bleed, for their kingdom and crown;
Woe, woe to the riders that trample them down!
Proud Cumberland prances, insulting the slain,
And their hoof-beaten bosoms are trod to the plain.
But hark! through the fast-flashing lightning of war,
What steed to the desert flies frantic and far?
'Tis thine, O Glenullin! whose bride shall await,
Like a love-lighted watch-fire, all night at the gate.
A steed comes at morning: no rider is there;
But its bridle is red with the sign of despair.
Weep, Albin! to death and captivity led!
Oh weep! but thy tears cannot number the dead;
For a merciless sword on Culloden shall wave,
Culloden! that reeks with the blood of the brave.

LOCHIEL.

Go, preach to the coward, thou death-telling seer!
Or, if gory Culloden so dreadful appear,
Draw, dotard, around thy old wavering sight,
This mantle, to cover the phantoms of fright.

WIZARD.

Ha! laugh'st thou, Lochiel, my vision to scorn?
Proud bird of the mountain, thy plume shall be torn!
Say, rush'd the bold eagle exultingly forth,
From his home, in the dark-rolling clouds of the north?

Lo! the death-shot of foemen outspeeding, he rode
Companionless, bearing destruction abroad;
But down let him stoop from his havoc on high!
Ah! home let him speed,—for the spoiler is nigh!
Why flames the far summit? Why shoot to the blast
Those embers, like stars from the firmament cast?
'Tis the fire-shower of ruin, all dreadfully driven
From his eyrie, that beacons the darkness of heaven.
Oh, crested Lochiel! the peerless in might,
Whose banners arise on the battlements' height,
Heaven's fire is around thee, to blast and to burn;
Return to thy dwelling! all lonely return!
For the blackness of ashes shall mark where it stood,
And a wild mother scream o'er her famishing brood.

LOCHIEL.

False Wizard, avaunt! I have marshall'd my clan,
Their swords are a thousand, their bosoms are one!
They are true to the last of their blood and their breath,
And like reapers descend to the harvest of death.
Then welcome be Cumberland's steed to the shock!
Let him dash his proud foam like a wave on the rock!
But woe to his kindred, and woe to his cause,
When Albin her claymore indignantly draws;
When her bonneted chieftains to victory crowd,
Clanronald the dauntless, and Moray the proud,
All plaided and plumed in their tartan array——

WIZARD.

——Lochiel, Lochiel! beware of the day;
For, dark and despairing, my sight I may seal,
But man cannot cover what God would reveal;
'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before.

I tell thee, Culloden's dread echoes shall ring
With the bloodhounds that bark for thy fugitive king.
Lo! anointed by Heaven with the vials of wrath,
Behold where he flies on his desolate path!
Now in darkness and billows, he sweeps from my sight;
Rise, rise! ye wild tempests, and cover his flight!
'Tis finished. Their thunders are hush'd on the moors;
Culloden is lost, and my country deplores.
But where is the iron-bound prisoner? Where?
For the red eye of battle is shut in despair.
Say, mounts he the ocean-wave, banish'd, forlorn,
Like a limb from his country cast bleeding and torn?
Ah no! for a darker departure is near;
The war-drum is muffled, and black is the bier;
His death-bell is tolling: oh! mercy, dispel
Yon sight, that it freezes my spirit to tell!
Life flutters convulsed in his quivering limbs,
And his blood-streaming nostril in agony swims.
Accurs'd be the faggots that blaze at his feet,
Where his heart shall be thrown, ere it ceases to beat,
With the smoke of its ashes to poison the gale——

LOCHIEL.

——Down, soothless insulter! I trust not the tale:
For never shall Albin a destiny meet,
So black with dishonour, so foul with retreat.
Though my perishing ranks should be strew'd in their gore,
Like ocean-weeds heap'd on the surf-beaten shore,
Lochiel, untainted by flight or by chains,
While the kindling of life in his bosom remains,
Shall victor exult, or in death be laid low,
With his back to the field, and his feet to the foe!
And leaving in battle no blot on his name,
Look proudly to heaven from the death-bed of fame.

IV.—THE SOLDIER'S DREAM.

OUR bugles sang truce, for the night-cloud had lower'd,
And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky;
And thousands had sunk on the ground overpower'd,
The weary to sleep and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw,
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain;
At the dead of the night a sweet vision I saw,
And thrice ere the morning I dreamt it again.

Methought from the battle-field's dreadful array,
Far, far I had roamed on a desolate track:
'Twas Autumn,—and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers, that welcomed me back.

I flew to the pleasant fields traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young;
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore,
From my home and my weeping friends never to part;
My little ones kiss'd me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobb'd aloud in her fulness of heart,

Stay, stay with us,—rest, thou art weary and worn!
And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay;—
But sorrow return'd with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

V.—LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER.

1804.

A CHIEFTAIN, to the Highlands bound,
Cries, "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound
To row us o'er the ferry."—

"Now who be ye would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water?"
"O, I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this Lord Ullin's daughter.—

"And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together;
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

"His horsemen hard behind us ride;
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride
When they have slain her lover?"—

Outspoke the hardy Highland wight,
"I'll go, my chief—I'm ready:—
It is not for your silver bright;
But for your winsome lady:

"And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So though the waves are raging white,
I'll row you o'er the ferry."—

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking;
And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode armed men,
Their trampling sounded nearer.—

"O haste thee, haste!" the lady cries,
"Though tempests round us gather;
I'll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father."—

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,—
When, oh! too strong for human hand,
The tempest gather'd o'er her.—

And still they row'd amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing;
Lord Ullin reach'd that fatal shore,
His wrath was changed to wailing.—

For sore dismay'd, through storm and shade,
His child he did discover;—
One lovely hand she stretch'd for aid,
And one was round her lover.

"Come back! come back!" he cried in grief,
"Across this stormy water;
And I'll forgive your Highland chief,
"My daughter!—Oh, my daughter!"—

'Twas vain:—the loud waves lash'd the shore,
Return or aid preventing:—
The waters wild went o'er his child,
And he was left lamenting.

VI.—THE BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

1809.

I.

OF Nelson and the North,
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand,
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.—

II.

Like leviathans afloat,
Lay their bulwarks on the brine;
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:
It was ten of April morn by the chime:
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death;
And the boldest held his breath
For a time.—

III.

But the might of England flush'd
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the fleeter rush'd
O'er the deadly space between.
"Hearts of oak!" our captains cried; when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

IV.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shatter'd sail;
Or, in conflagration pale,
Light the gloom.—

V

Out spoke the victor then,
As he hail'd them o'er the wave:
"Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save;—
So peace instead of death let us bring;
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King."—

VI.

Then Denmark bless'd our chief,
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day.
While the sun look'd smiling bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

VII.

Now joy, old England, raise!
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
While the wine-cup shines in light;
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep,
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!

VIII.

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died,—
With the gallant good Riou;
Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave!—

VII.—THE LAST MAN.

ALL worldly shapes shall melt in gloom,
The Sun himself must die,
Before this mortal shall assume
Its immortality!
I saw a vision in my sleep,
That gave my spirit strength to sweep
Adown the gulf of Time!
I saw the last of human mould
That shall creation's death behold,
As Adam saw her prime!

The Sun's eye had a sickly glare,
  The Earth with age was wan,
The skeletons of nations were
  Around that lonely man!
Some had expired in fight,—the brands
Still rusted in their bony hands;
  In plague and famine some!
Earth's cities had no sound nor tread;
And ships were drifting with the dead
  To shores where all was dumb!

Yet, prophet-like, that lone one stood
  With dauntless words and high,
That shook the sere leaves from the wood
  As if a storm pass'd by,
Saying, "We are twins in death, proud Sun!
Thy face is cold, thy race is run,
  'Tis Mercy bids thee go;
For thou ten thousand thousand years
Hast seen the tide of human tears,
  That shall no longer flow.

"What though beneath thee man put forth
  His pomp, his pride, his skill;
And arts that made fire, flood, and earth,
  The vassals of his will?—
Yet mourn I not thy parted sway,
Thou dim discrownèd king of day:
  For all those trophied arts
And triumphs that beneath thee sprang,
Heal'd not a passion or a pang
  Entail'd on human hearts.

"Go, let oblivion's curtain fall
Upon the stage of men,
Nor with thy rising beams recall
Life's tragedy again:
Its piteous pageants bring not back,
Nor waken flesh, upon the rack
Of pain anew to writhe;
Stretch'd in disease's shapes abhorr'd,
Or mown in battle by the sword,
Like grass beneath the scythe.

"Ev'n I am weary in yon skies
To watch thy fading fire;
Test of all sumless agonies,
Behold not me expire.
My lips that speak thy dirge of death—
Their rounded gasp and gurgling breath
To see thou shalt not boast.
The eclipse of Nature spreads my pall,—
The majesty of darkness shall
Receive my parting ghost!

"This spirit shall return to Him
Who gave its heavenly spark;
Yet, think not, Sun, it shall be dim
When thou thyself art dark!
No! it shall live again, and shine
In bliss unknown to beams of thine,
By Him recall'd to breath,
Who captive led captivity,
Who robb'd the grave of Victory,—
And took the sting from Death!

"Go, Sun, while Mercy holds me up
On Nature's awful waste
To drink this last and bitter cup
Of grief that man shall taste—
Go, tell the night that hides thy face,
Thou saw'st the last of Adam's race,
On Earth's sepulchral clod,
The darkening universe defy
To quench his Immortality,
Or shake his trust in God!"

VIII.—O'CONNOR'S CHILD;

OR,

"THE FLOWER OF LOVE LIES BLEEDING."

1810.

I.

OH! once the harp of Innisfail
Was strung full high to notes of gladness;
But yet it often told a tale
Of more prevailing sadness.
Sad was the note, and wild its fall,
As winds that moan at night forlorn
Along the isles of Fion-Gall,
When, for O'Connor's child to mourn,
The harper told, how lone, how far
From any mansion's twinkling star,
From any path of social men,
Or voice, but from the fox's den,
The lady in the desert dwelt;
And yet no wrongs, no fears she felt:
Say, why should dwell in place so wild,
O'Connor's pale and lovely child?

II.

Sweet lady! she no more inspires
Green Erin's hearts with beauty's power,
As, in the palace of her sires,
She bloom'd a peerless flower.
Gone from her hand and bosom, gone,
The royal brooch, the jewell'd ring,
That o'er her dazzling whiteness shone,
Like dews on lilies of the spring.
Yet why, though fall'n her brothers' kerne
Beneath De Bourgo's battle stern,
While yet in Leinster unexplored,
Her friends survived the English sword;
Why lingers she from Erin's host,
So far on Galway's shipwreck'd coast;
Why wanders she a huntress wild—
O'Connor's pale and lovely child?

III.

And fix'd on empty space, why burn
Her eyes with momentary wildness;
And wherefore do they then return
To more than woman's mildness?
Dishevell'd are her raven locks;
On Connocht Moran's name she calls;
And oft amidst the lonely rocks
She sings sweet madrigals.
Placed 'midst the foxglove and the moss,
Behold a parted warrior's cross!
That is the spot where, evermore,
The lady, at her shieling door,
Enjoys that, in communion sweet,
The living and the dead can meet,
For, lo! to love-lorn fantasy,
The hero of her heart is nigh.

IV.

Bright as the bow that spans the storm,
In Erin's yellow vesture clad,
A son of light—a lovely form,
He comes and makes her glad ;
Now on the grass-green turf he sits,
His tassell'd horn beside him laid ;
Now o'er the hills in chase he flits,
The hunter and the deer a shade !
Sweeter mourner ! those are shadows vain
That cross the twilight of her brain ;
Yet she will tell you she is blest,
Of Connocht Moran's tomb possess'd,
More richly than in Aghrim's bower,
When bards high praised her beauty's power,
And kneeling pages offer'd up
The mórat in a golden cup.

V.

"A hero's bride ! this desert bower,
It ill befits thy gentle breeding :
And wherefore dost thou love this flower
To call—'My love lies bleeding' ?"
"This purple flower my tears have nursed ;
A hero's blood supplied its bloom :
I love it, for it was the first
That grew on Connocht Moran's tomb.
Oh ! hearken, stranger, to my voice !
This desert mansion is my choice !
And blest, though fatal, be the star
That led me to its wilds afar :
For here these pathless mountains free
Gave shelter to my love and me ;
And every rock and every stone
Bear witness that he was my own.

VI.

"O'Connor's child, I was the bud
Of Erin's royal tree of glory;
But woe to them that wrapt in blood
The tissue of my story!
Still as I clasp my burning brain,
A death-scene rushes on my sight;
It rises o'er and o'er again,
The bloody feud—the fatal night,
When chafing Connocht Moran's scorn,
They called my hero basely-born;
And bade him choose a meaner bride
Than from O'Connor's house of pride.
Their tribe, they said, their high degree,
Was sung in Tara's psaltery;
Witness their Eath's victorious brand;
And Cathal of the bloody hand;
Glory (they said) and power and honour
Were in the mansion of O'Connor:
But he, my loved one, bore in field
A humbler crest, a meaner shield.

VII.

"Ah, brothers! what did it avail,
That fiercely and triumphantly
Ye fought the English of the pale,
And stemmed De Bourgo's chivalry!
And what was it to love and me,
That barons by your standard rode;
Or beal-fires for your jubilee
Upon a hundred mountains glow'd?
What though the lords of tower and dome
From Shannon to the North-sea foam,—
Thought ye your iron hands of pride
Could break the knot that love had tied?

No :—let the eagle change his plume,
The leaf its hue, the flower its bloom ;
But ties around this heart were spun,
That could not, would not, be undone!

VIII.

"At bleating of the wild watch-fold
Thus sang my love—'Oh, come with me ;
Our bark is on the lake, behold
Our steeds are fasten'd to the tree.
Come far from Castle-Connor's clans :—
Come with thy belted forestere,
And I, beside the lake of swans,
Shall hunt for thee the fallow-deer ;
And build thy hut, and bring thee home
The wild-fowl and the honey-comb ;
And berries from the wood provide,
And play my clarshech by thy side.
Then come, my love!'—How could I stay?
Our nimble stag-hounds track'd the way,
And I pursued, by moonless skies,
The light of Connocht Moran's eyes.

IX.

"And fast and far, before the star
Of day-spring, rush'd we through the glade,
And saw at dawn the lofty bawn
Of Castle-Connor fade.
Sweet was to us the hermitage
Of this unplough'd, untrodden shore ;
Like birds all joyous from the cage,
For man's neglect we loved it more,
And well he knew, my huntsman dear,
To search the game with hawk and spear ;
While I, his evening food to dress,
Would sing to him in happiness.

But, oh, that midnight of despair!
When I was doom'd to rend my hair:
The night, to me, of shrieking sorrow!
The night, to him, that had no morrow!

X.

"When all was hush'd, at eventide,
I heard the baying of their beagle:
'Be hush'd!' my Connocht Moran cried,
'Tis but the screaming of the eagle.
Alas! 'twas not the eyrie's sound;
Their bloody bands had track'd us out;
Up-listening starts our couchant hound—
And, hark! again, that nearer shout
Brings faster on the murderers.
Spare—spare him—Brazil—Desmond fierce!
In vain—no voice the adder charms;
Their weapons cross'd my sheltering arms:
Another's sword has laid him low—
Another's and another's;
And every hand that dealt the blow—
Ah me! it was a brother's!
Yes, when his moanings died away,
Their iron hands had dug the clay,
And o'er his burial turf they trod,
And I beheld—Oh God! Oh God!
His life-blood oozing from the sod!

XI.

"Warm in his death-wounds sepulchred,
Alas! my warrior's spirit brave
Nor mass nor ulla-lulla heard,
Lamenting, soothe his grave.
Dragged to their hated mansion back,
How long in thraldom's grasp I lay

I knew not, for my soul was black,
And knew no change of night or day.
One night of horror round me grew;
Or if I saw, or felt, or knew,
'Twas but when those grim visages,
The angry brothers of my race,
Glared on each eye-ball's aching throb,
And check'd my bosom's power to sob,
Or when my heart with pulses drear
Beat like a death-watch to my ear.

XII.

"But Heaven, at last, my soul's eclipse
Did with a vision bright inspire;
I woke and felt upon my lips
A prophetess's fire.
Thrice in the east a war-drum beat,
I heard the Saxon's trumpet sound,
And ranged, as to the judgment-seat,
My guilty, trembling brothers round.
Clad in the helm and shield they came;
For now De Bourgo's sword and flame
Had ravaged Ulster's boundaries,
And lighted up the midnight skies.
The standard of O'Connor's sway
Was in the turret where I lay;
That standard with so dire a look,
As ghastly shone the moon and pale,
I gave, that every bosom shook
Beneath its iron mail.

XIII.

"'And go!' I cried, 'the combat seek,
Ye hearts that unappallèd bore
The anguish of a sister's shriek,
Go!—and return no more!

For sooner guilt the ordeal brand
Shall gasp unhurt, than ye shall hold
The banner with victorious hand
Beneath a sister's curse unroll'd.'
O stranger! by my country's loss!
And by my love! and by the cross!
I swear I never could have spoke
The curse that sever'd nature's yoke,
But that a spirit o'er me stood,
And fired me with the wrathful mood;
And frenzy to my heart was given,
To speak the malison of heaven.

XIV.

"They would have cross'd themselves, all mute;
They would have pray'd to burst the spell;
But at the stamping of my foot
Each hand down powerless fell!
'And go to Athunree!' I cried,
'High lift the banner of your pride!
But know that where its sheet unrolls,
The weight of blood is on your souls!
Go where the havoc of your kerne
Shall float as high as mountain fern!
Men shall no more your mansion know;
The nettles on your hearth shall grow!
Dead, as the green oblivious flood
That mantles by your walls, shall be
The glory of O'Connor's blood!
Away! away to Athunree!
Where, downward when the sun shall fall,
The raven's wing shall be your pall!
And not a vassal shall unlace
The vizor from your dying face!'

XV.

"A bolt that overhung our dome
Suspended till my curse was given,
Soon as it pass'd these lips of foam,
Peal'd in the blood-red heaven.
Dire was the look that o'er their backs
The angry parting brothers threw:
But now, behold! like cataracts,
Come down the hills in view
O'Connor's plumèd partisans;
Thrice ten Kilnagorvian clans
Were marching to their doom:
A sudden storm their plumage toss'd,
A flash of lightning o'er them cross'd,
And all again was gloom!

XVI.

"Stranger! I fled the home of grief,
At Connocht Moran's tomb to fall;
I found the helmet of my chief,
His bow still hanging on our wall,
And took it down and vow'd to rove
This desert place a huntress bold;
Nor would I change my buried love
For any heart of living mould.
No! for I am a hero's child;
I'll hunt my quarry in the wild;
And still my home this mansion make,
Of all unheeded and unheeding,
And cherish, for my warrior's sake—
'The flower of love lies bleeding.'"

THE PLEASURES OF HOPE.

1798.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

THE FALL OF POLAND.

FROM PART I.

Oh! sacred Truth! thy triumph ceased a while,
And Hope, thy sister, ceased with thee to smile,
When leagued Oppression pour'd to Northern wars
Her whisker'd pandoors and her fierce hussars,
Waved her dread standard to the breeze of morn,
Peal'd her loud drum, and twang'd her trumpet-horn,
Tumultuous horror brooded o'er her van,
Presaging wrath to Poland—and to man!

Warsaw's last champion from her heights survey'd,
Wide o'er the fields, a waste of ruin laid,—
"O Heaven!" he cried, "my bleeding country save!—
Is there no hand on high to shield the brave?
Yet, though destruction sweep those lovely plains,
Rise, fellow-men! our country yet remains!
By that dread name, we wave the sword on high!
And swear for her to live!—with her to die!"

He said, and on the rampart-heights array'd
His trusty warriors, few, but undismay'd;
Firm-paced and slow, a horrid front they form,
Still as the breeze, but dreadful as the storm;
Low murmuring sounds along their banners fly,
Revenge, or death,—the watchword and reply;
Then peal'd the notes, omnipotent to charm,
And the loud tocsin toll'd their last alarm!—

In vain, alas! in vain, ye gallant few!
From rank to rank your volley'd thunder flew:—
Oh, bloodiest picture in the book of Time,
Sarmatia fell, unwept, without a crime;
Found not a generous friend, a pitying foe,
Strength in her arms, nor mercy in her woe!
Dropp'd from her nerveless grasp the shatter'd spear,
Closed her bright eye, and curb'd her high career;—
Hope, for a season, bade the world farewell,
And Freedom shriek'd—as Kosciusko fell!

The sun went down, nor ceased the carnage there,
Tumultuous murder shook the midnight air—
On Prague's proud arch the fires of ruin glow,
His blood-dyed waters murmuring far below;
The storm prevails, the rampart yields a way,
Bursts the wild cry of horror and dismay!
Hark, as the smouldering piles with thunder fall,
A thousand shrieks for hopeless mercy call!
Earth shook—red meteors flash'd along the sky,
And conscious Nature shudder'd at the cry!

Oh! righteous Heaven; ere Freedom found a grave,
Why slept the sword omnipotent to save?
Where was thine arm, O Vengeance! where thy rod
That smote the foes of Zion and of God;
That crush'd proud Ammon, when his iron car
Was yoked in wrath, and thunder'd from afar?
Where was the storm that slumber'd till the host
Of blood-stain'd Pharaoh left their trembling coast;
Then bade the deep in wild commotion flow,
And heaved an ocean on their march below?

Departed spirits of the mighty dead!
Ye that at Marathon and Leuctra bled!
Friends of the world! restore your swords to man,
Fight in his sacred cause, and lead the van!
Yet for Sarmatia's tears of blood atone,
And make her arm puissant as your own!
Oh! once again to Freedom's cause return
The patriot TELL—the BRUCE OF BANNOCKBURN!

Yes! thy proud lords, unpitied land! shall see
That man hath yet a soul—and dare be free!
A little while, along thy saddening plains,
The starless night of Desolation reigns;
Truth shall restore the light by Nature given,
And, like Prometheus, bring the fire of Heaven!
Prone to the dust Oppression shall be hurl'd,
Her name, her nature, wither'd from the world!

GERTRUDE OF WYOMING.

1809.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

THE DEATH OF GERTRUDE.

FROM PART III.

(XXV.)

Past was the flight, and welcome seem'd the tower,
That like a giant standard-bearer frown'd
Defiance on the roving Indian power,
Beneath, each bold and promontory mound
With embrasure emboss'd and armour crown'd,
And arrowy frize, and wedged ravelin,
Wove like a diadem its tracery round
The lofty summit of that mountain green;
Here stood secure the group, and eyed a distant scene.—

(XXVI.)

A scene of death! where fires beneath the sun,
And blended arms, and white pavilions glow;
And for the business of destruction done,
Its requiem the war-horn seem'd to blow:
There, sad spectatress of her country's woe!
The lovely Gertrude, safe from present harm,
Had laid her cheek, and clasp'd her hands of snow
On Waldegrave's shoulder, half within his arm
Enclosed, that felt her heart, and hush'd its wild alarm!

(XXVII.)

But short that contemplation—sad and short
The pause to bid each much-loved scene adieu!
Beneath the very shadow of the fort,
Where friendly swords were drawn, and banners flew:
Ah! who could deem that foot of Indian crew
Was near?—yet there, with lust of murderous deeds,
Gleam'd like a basilisk, from woods in view,
The ambush'd foeman's eye—his volley speeds,
And Albert—Albert falls! the dear old father bleeds!

(XXVIII.)

And tranced in giddy horror, Gertrude swoon'd;
Yet, while she clasps him lifeless to her zone,
Say, burst they, borrow'd from her father's wound,
These drops? Oh, God! the life-blood is her own!
And faltering, on her Waldegrave's bosom thrown;
"Weep not, O Love!"—she cries, "to see me bleed;
Thee, Gertrude's sad survivor, thee alone
Heaven's peace commiserate; for scarce I heed
These wounds;—yet thee to leave is death, is death
indeed!

(XXIX.)

"Clasp me a little longer on the brink
Of fate! while I can feel thy dear caress;
And when this heart hath ceased to beat,—oh! think
And let it mitigate thy woe's excess,
That thou hast been to me all tenderness,
And friend to more than human friendship just.
Oh! by that retrospect of happiness,
And by the hopes of an immortal trust,
God shall assuage thy pangs—when I am laid in dust!

(XXX.)

"Go, Henry, go not back, when I depart,
The scene thy bursting tears too deep will move,
Where my dear father took thee to his heart,
And Gertrude thought it ecstasy to rove
With thee, as with an angel, through the grove
Of peace, imagining her lot was cast
In heaven; for ours was not like earthly love.
And must this parting be our very last?
No! I shall love thee still, when death itself is past.—

(XXXI.)

"Half could I bear, methinks, to leave this earth,—
And thee, more loved than aught beneath the sun,
If I had lived to smile but on the birth
Of one dear pledge;—but shall there then be none,
In future times—no gentle little one
To clasp thy neck, and look, resembling me?
Yet seems it, even while life's last pulses run,
A sweetness in the cup of death to be,
Lord of my bosom's love! to die beholding thee!"

(XXXII.)

Hushed were his Gertrude's lips! but still their bland
And beautiful expression seem'd to melt
With love that could not die! and still his hand
She presses to the heart no more that felt.
Ah, heart! where once each fond affection dwelt,
And features yet that spoke a soul more fair.
Mute, gazing, agonizing as he knelt,—
Of them that stood encircling his despair
He heard some friendly words; but knew not what
they were.

(XXXIII.)

For now, to mourn their judge and child, arrives
A faithful band. With solemn rites between
'Twas sung how they were lovely in their lives,
And in their deaths had not divided been.
Touch'd by the music, and the melting scene,
Was scarce one tearless eye amidst the crowd :—
Stern warriors, resting on their swords, were seen
To veil their eyes, as pass'd each much-loved shroud,
While women's softer soul in woe dissolved aloud.

(XXXIV.)

Then mournfully the parting bugle bid
Its farewell o'er the grave of worth and truth ;
Prone to the dust afflicted Waldegrave hid
His face on earth ;—him watch'd, in gloomy ruth,
His woodland guide ; but words had none to soothe
The grief that knew not consolation's name ;
Casting his Indian mantle o'er the youth,
He watch'd, beneath its folds, each burst that came
Convulsive, ague-like, across his shuddering frame !

(XXXV.)

"And I could weep ;"—th' Oneyda chief
His descant wildly thus begun :
"But that I may not stain with grief
The death-song of my father's son,
Or bow this head in woe !
For, by my wrongs, and by my wrath,
To-morrow Areouski's breath,
(That fires yon heaven with storms of death,)
Shall light us to the foe :
And we shall share, my Christian boy,
The foeman's blood, the avenger's joy !

(XXXVI.)

"But thee, my flower, whose breath was given
By milder genii o'er the deep,
The spirits of the white man's heaven
Forbid not thee to weep:—
Nor will the Christian host,
Nor will thy father's spirit grieve,
To see thee, on the battle's eve,
Lamenting, take a mournful leave
Of her who loved thee most:
She was the rainbow to thy sight!
Thy sun—thy heaven—of lost delight.

(XXXVII.)

"To-morrow let us do or die!
But when the bolt of death is hurl'd,
Ah! whither then with thee to fly,
Shall Outalissi roam the world?
Seek we thy once-loved home?
The hand is gone that cropt its flowers;
Unheard their clock repeats its hours;
Cold is the hearth within their bowers!
And should we thither roam,
Its echoes and its empty tread
Would sound like voices from the dead!

(XXXVIII.)

Or shall we cross yon mountains blue,
Whose streams my kindred nations quaff'd,
And by my side, in battle true,
A thousand warriors drew the shaft?

Ah! there, in desolation cold,
The desert serpent dwells alone,
Where grass o'ergrows each mouldering bone,
And stones themselves to ruin grown,
Like me are death-like old.
Then seek we not their camp,—for there
The silence dwells of my despair!

(XXXIX.)

But hark, the trump! to-morrow thou
In glory's fires shalt dry thy tears:
Even from the land of shadows now
My father's awful ghost appears
Amidst the clouds that round us roll;
He bids my soul for battle thirst—
He bids me dry the last—the first—
The only tears that ever burst
From Outalissi's soul;
Because I may not stain with grief
The death-song of an Indian chief!"

Thomas Moore.

1779—1852.

"SURELY you must have been born with a rose in your lips, and a nightingale singing on the top of your bed," said Samuel Rogers to Moore; and there is much significance in the conceit. Moore's poems are full of colour, while their melody is almost faultless. His verse is sensuous and sweet. It seldom reaches passion or heroic aspiration. There is no profound depth of thought, no far insight of human nature or character. But it is full of airy fancies which are wrought into musical numbers characterised by exquisite finish which at its best shows no signs of elaboration. The flow and modulation of his lines give them an immediate affinity to music, and it seems but in the natural order of things that they should have been sung in a tender, sympathetic voice by the poet himself. Moore's songs still live in popular appreciation, now that "Lalla Rookh" is seldom read, and its splendours—astonishing as they are—have to a great extent ceased to hold the fancy of a younger generation. Even his Irish patriotic songs are remembered with something of the thrill which they caused when they were sung in fashionable drawing-rooms more than half a century ago.

Though Moore had less depth and less force of genius than some, he had as much learning as most of his contemporaries, and a warmer and more

exuberant fancy. This he employed with matchless grace in his splendid romance, "The Epicurean" (prose only in form), and in "Lalla Rookh," as well as in some of his shorter poems. Like most other poets who are facile, he wrote too much, and in doing so, laid himself open to the charge of tawdry dressing and the application of the proverb, "All is not gold that glitters." But he was a natural poet, born with the gift of song, and his education gave discrimination to his genius, without diminishing his facility of expression or the vividness and fertility of his imagination.

Thomas Moore was born in 1779 in Dublin, where his father was in business as a grocer. The boy was placed under the care of a tutor, who had also been the teacher of Sheridan. In 1793, by an act of the Legislature, Dublin University was opened to Roman Catholic students, and Moore's father, who was an adherent of the Irish patriotic party, placed him there. Although he gained some distinction, the fact of his being a Roman Catholic precluded him from taking a degree, and his political opinions, perhaps too freely expressed, were rebuked by the authorities. It was at the University that he became a friend of the unfortunate Robert Emmett, who paid the forfeit of his life for his subsequent attempts to sustain an Irish rebellion, and it was in reference to the young wife of Emmett that Moore afterwards wrote the poem, "She is far from the Land where her Young Hero sleeps."

After graduating, Moore went to London, and entered at the Middle Temple to study law. In 1801 he published the "Odes of Anacreon," which he had composed while at college; and in 1802 the

"Poetical Works of Thomas Little"—a name which referred to his very small stature. These poems were imitations of Catullus, which showed ability, but were otherwise objectionable.

In 1804 he went to Bermuda, where he entered on the duties of Registrar to the Admiralty Court—a situation obtained through Lord Moira—but these duties soon becoming irksome, he appointed a deputy, and returned to England in 1806, where he published "Odes and Epistles," which were noticed with Moore's early writings in the *Edinburgh Review*, and spoken of by Jeffrey, who was the editor, with such severity that Moore sent him a challenge. By the "code of honour" of those days Jeffrey could not refuse, and the two little men (for Jeffrey was as diminutive as Moore) met early one morning at Chalk Farm in a field screened on one side by large trees. Moore had borrowed his pistols from the Hon. William Robert Spencer, and went with his second, Mr. Hume, in a coach to the place of meeting. Jeffrey with his second, Mr. Horner, and a surgeon was already there. The seconds, who knew very little about such affairs, retired to load the pistols, leaving Jeffrey and Moore together. They had bowed to each other, but had not spoken till Jeffrey said: "What a beautiful morning!" "Yes," replied Moore with a smile; "a morning made for better purposes." Jeffrey replied only with a sort of assenting sigh; but the seconds took so long in their preparations that the two combatants walked up and down together till they came within sight of them, and Moore related an anecdote to his antagonist about one Billy Egan, an Irish barrister, who, under similar circumstances, ha

sauntered too near to the seconds, who angrily shouted to him to keep his ground. "Don't make yourself unaisy, my dear fellow," replied Egan; "sure, isn't it bad enough to take the dose without being by at the mixing up?"

Jeffrey had scarcely time to smile at the story before the seconds came up and placed their men; the pistols were raised, the combatants waited only for the signal to fire, when some Bow Street officers, who had been sent by Spencer, and had been hiding behind the trees, rushed up, and the two principals were carried before a magistrate at Bow Street.

Byron was satirically merry over the affair, which excited a good deal of ridicule; but Moore and Jeffrey became close friends, and Moore soon established a still more cordial friendship with Byron.

Moore had long been the favourite of London drawing-rooms, and was received everywhere with much welcome and no little flattery for his sparkling wit and his musical ability. He was sufficiently vain of his accomplishments—but that is scarcely to be wondered at, as they were in constant requisition. One rather droll episode was his introduction to Harriet Martineau, beside whom he sat for some time talking in his usual gay manner, and afterwards went to the pianoforte and offered to sing to her. As the lady was so deaf that she could only listen through an ear-trumpet, and as she probably cared nothing for Moore's persiflage, little for his poetry, and not much for his singing, it was rather a waste of trouble.

Moore, with his excellent wife (who had been Miss Bessy Dyke) and their young family, left London to live in a cottage near Ashbourne, in

Derbyshire, and there wrote some of his best and more serious poems, including the earlier of the "National Airs," which appeared in 1815, and "Sacred Songs, Duets, and Trios," with music composed and selected by himself and Sir J. Stevenson It was there in comparative seclusion, and amidst the snows of two or three winters, in a lone cottage in the fields, that he gathered, with much research into books, the material for the gorgeous imagery and oriental splendour displayed in "Lalla Rookh," for which he was paid three thousand guineas by the publishers. It was published in 1817, and consists of four tales, "The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan," "Paradise and the Peri," "The Fire Worshippers," and "The Light of the Harem," connected by a brief prose narrative. The success of this work was enormous, and it was said to have been translated into Persian. Some serious defalcations of his deputy in Bermuda, led to a demand being made upon Moore, to make good the losses sustained by the Government, and for a time he was in great pecuniary difficulty, but while the case was pending he travelled with Lord John Russell in Switzerland and Italy, and from Milan visited Venice, where he remained for some time with Byron. His friends offered to come to his relief; the amount demanded was greatly reduced, and by assiduous industry and the handsome sums he received for his "Loves of the Angels," and other works, he was able to meet his liabilities.

On leaving Venice he received as a parting gift the MS. of Byron's Memoirs, which he was to publish for his own benefit after Byron's death. In 1821 he took the MS. to Mr. Murray, and agreed

to edit it for two thousand guineas. On Byron's death, in 1824, Lady Byron and some friends looked over the MS., and agreed with Mr. Murray that it should not be published, agreeing rather to repay the money which had been given to Moore; but this Moore would not allow, and he eventually refunded the amount, though it was understood that he was afterwards persuaded to accept a recompense. The MS. was believed to be destroyed by Mr. Murray, and some years afterwards (in 1830), Moore wrote a "Life of Byron" for Longmans for a like sum. In the following year he wrote a "Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald." During his later years Moore retired with his family to a cottage near Devizes, where he enjoyed a personal pension of three hundred pounds a year, and there he collected his poetical works which were published in ten volumes. For some time before his death his brilliant intellect and teeming fancy were clouded by mental affliction. He died in 1852. His memoirs, journal, and correspondence, were prepared by Lord John Russell, and published in 1853, in eight volumes. Moore's modern reputation is chiefly associated with his songs and melodies. "The Last Rose of Summer," "The Harp of Tara," and "The Minstrel Boy," will probably survive along with others; nor will his sacred songs be soon forgotten. "Sound the loud timbrel," "Thou art, O God, the life and light," and "This world is all a fleeting show," are still said and sung by numbers of people who do not know that they were written by "Tom Moore."

THOMAS ARCHER.

IRISH MELODIES.

THOMAS MOORE.

I.—WHEN HE, WHO ADORES THEE.

WHEN he, who adores thee, has left but the name
Of his fault and his sorrows behind,
Oh! say, wilt thou weep, when they darken the fame
Of a life that for thee was resign'd?
Yes, weep, and however my foes may condemn,
Thy tears shall efface their decree;
For Heaven can witness, though guilty to them,
I have been but too faithful to thee.

With thee were the dreams of my earliest love;
Every thought of my reason was thine;
In my last humble prayer to the Spirit above,
Thy name shall be mingled with mine.
Oh! blest are the lovers and friends who shall live
The days of thy glory to see;
But the next dearest blessing that Heaven can give
Is the pride of thus dying for thee.

II. THE HARP THAT ONCE THROUGH TARA'S HALLS.

THE harp that once through Tara's halls
The soul of music shed,
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls,
As if that soul were fled.

So sleeps the pride of former days,
So glory's thrill is o'er,
And hearts, that once beat high for praise,
Now feel that pulse no more.

No more to chiefs and ladies bright
The harp of Tara swells;
The chord alone, that breaks at night,
Its tale of ruin tells.
Thus Freedom now so seldom wakes,
The only throb she gives,
Is when some heart indignant breaks,
To show that still she lives.

III.—THE MEETING OF THE WATERS.

THERE is not in the wide world a valley so sweet
As that vale in whose bosom the bright waters meet;
Oh! the last rays of feeling and life must depart,
Ere the bloom of that valley shall fade from my heart.

Yet it *was* not that nature had shed o'er the scene
Her purest of crystal and brightest of green;
'Twas *not* her soft magic of streamlet or hill,
Oh! no,—it was something more exquisite still.

'Twas that friends, the belov'd of my bosom, were near,
Who made every dear scene of enchantment more dear,
And who felt how the best charms of nature improve,
When we see them reflected from looks that we love.

Sweet vale of Avoca! how calm could I rest
In thy bosom of shade, with the friends I love best,
Where the storms that we feel in this cold world should cease,
And our hearts, like thy waters, be mingled in peace.

IV.—BELIEVE ME, IF ALL THOSE ENDEARING YOUNG CHARMS.

BELIEVE me, if all those endearing young charms,
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my arms,
Like fairy-gifts fading away,
Thou would'st still be ador'd, as this moment thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
And thy cheeks unprofan'd by a tear,
That the fervour and faith of a soul can be known,
To which time will but make thee more dear;
No, the heart that has truly lov'd never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sun-flower turns on her god, when he sets,
The same look which she turn'd when he rose.

V.—LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM.

OH! the days are gone, when Beauty bright
My heart's chain wove;
When my dream of life, from morn till night,
Was love, still love.
New hope may bloom,
And days may come
Of milder, calmer beam,
But there's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream:
No, there's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream.

Tho' the bard to purer fame may soar,
When wild youth's past;
Tho' he win the wise, who frown'd before,
To smile at last;
He'll never meet
A joy so sweet,
In all his noon of fame,
As when first he sang in woman's ear,
His soul-felt flame,
And, at every close, she blush'd to hear
The one lov'd name.

No,—that hallow'd form is ne'er forgot
Which first love trac'd;
Still it lingering haunts the greenest spot
On memory's waste.
'Twas odour fled
As soon as shed;
'Twas morning's wingèd dream;
'Twas a light that ne'er can shine again
On life's dull stream:
Oh! 'twas light that ne'er can shine again
On life's dull stream.

VI.—LESBIA HATH A BEAMING EYE.

LESBIA hath a beaming eye,
But no one knows for whom it beameth;
Right and left its arrows fly,
But what they aim at no one dreameth.
Sweeter 'tis to gaze upon
My Nora's lid that seldom rises;
Few its looks, but every one,
Like unexpected light surprises!

Oh, my Nora Creina, dear!
My gentle, bashful Nora Creina!
Beauty lies
In many eyes,
But Love in yours, my Nora Creina!

Lesbia wears a robe of gold,
But all so close the nymph hath lac'd it,
Not a charm of beauty's mould
Presumes to stay where nature plac'd it.
Oh! my Nora's gown for me,
That floats as wild as mountain breezes,
Leaving every beauty free
To sink or swell as Heaven pleases!
Yes, my Nora Creina, dear,
My simple, graceful Nora Creina!
Nature's dress
Is loveliness—
The dress *you* wear, my Nora Creina!

Lesbia has a wit refin'd,
But, when its points are gleaming round us,
Who can tell if they're design'd
To dazzle merely, or to wound us?
Pillow'd on my Nora's heart,
In safer slumber Love reposes—
Bed of peace! whose roughest part
Is but the crumpling of the roses.
Oh, my Nora Creina dear!
My mild, my artless Nora Creina!
Wit, tho' bright,
Hath no such light
As warms your eyes, my Nora Creina!

VII.—BY THAT LAKE WHOSE GLOOMY SHORE.

BY that Lake, whose gloomy shore
Sky-lark never warbles o'er,
Where the cliff hangs high and steep,
Young St. Kevin stole to sleep.
"Here, at least," he calmly said,
"Woman ne'er shall find my bed."
Ah! the good Saint little knew
What that wily sex can do.

'Twas from Kathleen's eyes he flew,—
Eyes of most unholy blue!
She had lov'd him well and long,
Wish'd him hers, nor thought it wrong.
Wheresoe'er the Saint would fly,
Still he heard her light foot nigh;
East or west, where'er he turn'd,
Still her eyes before him burn'd.

On the bold cliff's bosom cast,
Tranquil now he sleeps at last!
Dreams of heav'n, nor thinks that e'er
Woman's smile can haunt him there.
But nor earth nor heaven is free
From her power, if fond she be:
Even now, while calm he sleeps,
Kathleen o'er him leans and weeps.

Fearless she had track'd his feet
To this rocky, wild retreat;
And, when morning met his view,
Her mild glances met it too.

Ah, your Saints have cruel hearts!
Sternly from his bed he starts,
And with rude, repulsive shock,
Hurls her from the beetling rock.

Glendalough, thy gloomy wave
Soon was gentle Kathleen's grave!
Soon the Saint (yet ah! too late,)
Felt her love, and mourn'd her fate.
When he said, "Heav'n rest her soul!"
Round the Lake light music stole;
And her ghost was seen to glide,
Smiling o'er the fatal tide!

VIII.—THE LAST ROSE OF SUMMER.

'TIS the last rose of summer
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone;
No flow'r of her kindred,
No rose-bud is nigh,
To reflect back her blushes,
Or give sigh for sigh.

I'll not leave thee, thou lone one!
To pine on the stem;
Since the lovely are sleeping,
Go, sleep thou with them.
Thus kindly I scatter
Thy leaves o'er the bed,
Where thy mates of the garden
Lie scentless and dead.

So soon may *I* follow,
When friendships decay,
And from Love's shining circle
The gems drop away.
When true hearts lie wither'd,
And fond ones are flown,
Oh! who would inhabit
This bleak world alone?

IX.—THE YOUNG MAY MOON.

THE young May moon is beaming, love,
The glow-worm's lamp is gleaming, love,
How sweet to rove
Through Morna's grove,
While the drowsy world is dreaming, love!
Then awake!—the heavens look bright, my dear,
'Tis never too late for delight, my dear,
And the best of all ways
To lengthen our days,
Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dear!

Now all the world is sleeping, love,
But the Sage, his star-watch keeping, love,
And I, whose star,
More glorious far,
Is the eye from that casement peeping, love.
Then awake!—till rise of sun, my dear,
The Sage's glass we'll shun, my dear,
Or, in watching the flight
Of bodies of light,
He might happen to take thee for one, my dear!

X.—THE MINSTREL BOY.

THE Minstrel-Boy to the war is gone,
In the ranks of death you'll find him;
His father's sword he has girded on,
And his wild harp slung behind him.—
"Land of song!" said the warrior bard,
"Tho' all the world betrays thee,
One sword, at least, thy rights shall guard,
One faithful harp shall praise thee!"

The Minstrel fell!—but the foeman's chain
Could not bring his proud soul under;
The harp he lov'd ne'er spoke again,
For he tore its chords asunder;
And said, "No chains shall sully thee,
Thou soul of love and bravery!
Thy songs were made for the pure and free,
They shall never sound in slavery."

XI.—THE TIME I'VE LOST IN WOOING.

THE time I've lost in wooing,
In watching and pursuing
The light, that lies
In woman's eyes,
Has been my heart's undoing.
Tho' Wisdom oft has sought me,
I scorn'd the lore she brought me,
My only books
Were woman's looks,
And folly's all they've taught me.

Her smile when Beauty granted,
I hung with gaze enchanted,
Like him the Sprite,
Whom maids, by night,
Oft meet in glen that's haunted.
Like him, too, Beauty won me,
But while her eyes were on me,
If once their ray
Was turn'd away,
O! winds could not outrun me.

And are those follies going?
And is my proud heart growing
Too cold or wise
For brilliant eyes
Again to set it glowing?
No,—vain, alas! th' endeavour
From bonds so sweet to sever;—
Poor Wisdom's chance
Against a glance
Is now as weak as ever.

XII.—DEAR HARP OF MY COUNTRY.

DEAR Harp of my Country! in darkness I found thee,
The cold chain of silence had hung o'er thee long,
When proudly, my own Island Harp, I unbound thee,
And gave all thy chords to light, freedom, and song!
The warm lay of love and the light note of gladness
Have waken'd thy fondest, thy liveliest thrill;
But, so oft hast thou echoed the deep sigh of sadness,
That ev'n in thy mirth it will steal from thee still.

Dear Harp of my Country ! farewell to thy numbers,
This sweet wreath of song is the last we shall twine!
Go, sleep with the sunshine of Fame on thy slumbers,
Till touch'd by some hand less unworthy than mine ;
If the pulse of the patriot, soldier, or lover,
Have throbb'd at our lay, 'tis thy glory alone ;
I was *but* as the wind passing heedlessly over,
And all the wild sweetness I wak'd was thy own.

XIII.—ECHO.

HOW sweet the answer Echo makes
To music at night,
When, roused by lute or horn, she wakes,
And far away, o'er lawns and lakes,
Goes answering light !

Yet Love hath echoes truer far,
And far more sweet,
Than e'er beneath the moonlight's star,
Of horn or lute, or soft guitar,
The songs repeat.

'Tis when the sigh, in youth sincere,
And only then,—
The sigh that's breath'd for one to hear,
Is by that one, that only dear,
Breath'd back again !

NATIONAL AIRS.

OFT IN THE STILLY NIGHT.

(SCOTCH AIR.)

OFT, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond Memory brings the light
Of other days around me ;
The smiles, the tears,
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken ;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimm'd and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken !
Thus, in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends, so link'd together,
I've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather ;
I feel like one,
Who treads alone,
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed !
Thus in the stilly night,
Ere Slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad Memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

LALLA ROOKH.

1817

THOMAS MOORE.

I.

PARADISE AND THE PERI.

1.

ONE morn a Peri at the gate
Of Eden stood, disconsolate;
And as she listen'd to the Springs
Of Life within, like music flowing,
And caught the light upon her wings
Through the half-open portal glowing,
She wept to think her recreant race
Should e'er have lost that glorious place!

"How happy!" exclaim'd this child of air,
"Are the holy Spirits who wander there,
'Mid flowers that never shall fade or fall;
Though mine are the gardens of earth and sea,
And the stars themselves have flowers for me,
One blossom of heaven out-blooms them all!

"Though sunny the Lake of cool Cashmere,
With its plane-tree Isle reflected clear,
And sweetly the founts of that Valley fall;
Though bright are the waters of SING-SU-HAY,
And the golden floods that thitherward stray,
Yet—oh, 'tis only the Blest can say,
How the waters of Heaven outshine them all!

"Go, wing thy flight from star to star,
From world to luminous world, as far
As the universe spreads its flaming wall:
Take all the pleasures of all the spheres,
And multiply each through endless years,
One minute of Heaven is worth them all!"

The glorious Angel, who was keeping
The gates of Light, beheld her weeping;
And, as he nearer drew and listen'd
To her sad song, a tear-drop glisten'd
Within his eyelids, like the spray
From Eden's fountain, when it lies
On the blue flow'r, which—Bramins say—
Blooms nowhere but in Paradise.

"Nymph of a fair, but erring line!"
Gently he said—"One hope is thine.
'Tis written in the Book of Fate,
The Peri yet may be forgiven
Who brings to this Eternal Gate
The Gift that is most dear to Heaven!
Go, seek it, and redeem thy sin—
'Tis sweet to let the Pardon'd in!"

Rapidly as comets run
To th' embraces of the Sun;—
Fleeter than the starry brands
Flung at night from angel hands,
At those dark and daring sprites
Who would climb th' empyreal heights,[1]
Down the blue vault the Peri flies,
And, lighted earthward by a glance
That just then broke from morning's eyes,
Hung hovering o'er our world's expanse.

But whither shall the Spirit go
To find this gift for Heav'n ?—"I know
The wealth," she cries, "of every urn,
In which unnumber'd rubies burn,
Beneath the pillars of Chilminar;— [2]
I know where the Isles of Perfume are
Many a fathom down in the sea,
To the south of sun-bright Araby;— [3]
I know, too, where the Genii hid
The jewell'd cup of their king Jamshid, [4]
With Life's elixir sparkling high—
But gifts like these are not for the sky.
Where was there ever a gem that shone
Like the steps of Alla's wonderful Throne ?
And the Drops of Life—oh ! what would they be
In the boundless Deep of Eternity ?"

While thus she mus'd, her pinions fann'd
The air of that sweet Indian land,
Whose air is balm ; whose ocean spreads
O'er coral rocks, and amber beds ;
Whose mountains, pregnant by the beam
Of the warm sun, with diamonds teem ;
Whose rivulets are like rich brides,
Lovely, with gold beneath their tides ;
Whose sandal groves and bowers of spice
Might be a Peri's Paradise !
But crimson now her rivers ran
With human blood—the smell of death
Came reeking from those spicy bowers,
And man, the sacrifice of man,
Mingled his taint with every breath
Upwafted from the innocent flowers !
Land of the Sun ! what fool invades
Thy Pagods and thy pillar'd shades—

Thy Cavern shrines, and Idol stones,
Thy Monarchs and their thousand Thrones?

'Tis He of Gazna—fierce in wrath
He comes, and India's diadems
Lie scatter'd in his ruinous path.—
His bloodhounds he adorns with gems,
Torn from the violated necks
Of many a young and lov'd Sultana;
Maidens, within their pure Zenana,
Priests in the very fane he slaughters,
And choaks up with the glittering wrecks
Of golden shrines the sacred waters!

Downward the Peri turns her gaze,
And, through the war-field's bloody haze
Beholds a youthful warrior stand,
Alone beside his native river,—
The red blade broken in his hand,
And the last arrow in his quiver.
"Live," said the Conqueror, "live to share
The trophies and the crowns I bear!"
Silent that youthful warrior stood—
Silent he pointed to the flood
All crimson with his country's blood,
Then sent his last remaining dart,
For answer, to th' Invader's heart.

False flew the shaft, though pointed well;
The Tyrant liv'd, the Hero fell!—
Yet mark'd the Peri where he lay,
And, when the rush of war was past,
Swiftly descending on a ray
Of morning light, she caught the last—

Last glorious drop his heart had shed,
Before its free-born spirit fled !

"Be this," she cried, as she wing'd her flight,
"My welcome gift at the Gates of Light.
Though foul are the drops that oft distil
On the field of warfare, blood like this,
For Liberty shed, so holy is,
It would not stain the purest rill,
That sparkles among the Bowers of Bliss !
Oh, if there be, on this earthly sphere,
A boon, an offering Heaven holds dear,
'Tis the last libation Liberty draws
From the heart that bleeds and breaks in her cause!'

"Sweet," said the Angel, as she gave
The gift into his radiant hand,
"Sweet is our welcome of the Brave
Who die thus for their native Land.—
But see—alas !—the crystal bar
Of Eden moves not—holier far
Than ev'n this drop the boon must be,
That opes the Gates of Heav'n for thee ! "

Her first fond hope of Eden blighted,
Now among Afric's lunar Mountains,
Far to the South, the Peri lighted ;
And sleek'd her plumage at the fountains
Of that Egyptian tide—whose birth
Is hidden from the sons of earth
Deep in those solitary woods,
Where oft the Genii of the Floods
Dance round the cradle of their Nile,
And hail the new-born Giant's smile.

Thence over Egypt's palmy groves,
  Her grots, and sepulchres of Kings,
The exil'd Spirit sighing roves;
And now hangs listening to the doves
In warm Rosetta's vale—now loves
  To watch the moonlight on the wings
Of the white pelicans that break
The azure calm of Mœris' Lake.
'Twas a fair scene—a Land more bright
  Never did mortal eye behold!
Who could have thought, that saw this night
  Those valleys and their fruits of gold
Basking in Heav'n's serenest light;—
Those groups of lovely date-trees bending
  Languidly their leaf-crown'd heads,
Like youthful maids, when sleep descending
  Warns them to their silken beds;—
Those virgin lilies, all the night
  Bathing their beauties in the lake,
That they may rise more fresh and bright,
  When their beloved Sun's awake;—
These ruin'd shrines and towers that seem
The relics of a splendid dream;
  Amid whose fairy loneliness
Nought but the lapwing's cry is heard,
Nought seen but (when the shadows, flitting
Fast from the morn, unsheath its gleam,
Some purple wing'd Sultana sitting
  Upon a column, motionless
And glittering, like an Idol bird!—
Who could have thought, that there, ev'n there,
Amid those scenes so still and fair,
The Demon of the Plague hath cast
From his hot wing a deadlier blast,

More mortal far than ever came
From the red Desert's sands of flame!
So quick, that every living thing
Of human shape, touch'd by his wing,
Like plants, where the Simoom hath past,
At once falls black and withering!

The sun went down on many a brow,
  Which, full of bloom and freshness then,
Is rankling in the pest-house now,
  And ne'er will feel that sun again.
And, oh! to see th' unburied heaps
On which the lonely moonlight sleeps—
The very vultures turn away,
And sicken at so foul a prey!
Only the fierce hyæna stalks
Throughout the city's desolate walks
At midnight, and his carnage plies:—
  Woe to the half-dead wretch, who meets
The glaring of those large blue eyes
  Amid the darkness of the streets!

"Poor race of men!" said the pitying Spirit,
  "Dearly ye pay for your primal Fall—
Some flow'rets of Eden ye still inherit,
  But the trail of the Serpent is over them all!"
She wept—the air grew pure and clear
  Around her, as the bright drops ran:
For there's a magic in each tear,
  Such kindly Spirits weep for man!
Just then beneath some orange-trees,
Whose fruit and blossoms in the breeze
Were wantoning together, free,
Like age at play with infancy—

Beneath that fresh and springing bower,
  Close by the Lake, she heard the moan
Of one who, at this silent hour,
  Had thither stol'n to die alone.
One who in life where'er he mov'd,
  Drew after him the hearts of many;
Yet now, as though he ne'er were lov'd,
  Dies here unseen, unwept by any!
None to watch near him—none to slake
  The fire that in his bosom lies,
With ev'n a sprinkle from that lake,
  Which shines so cool before his eyes.
No voice, well known through many a day,
  To speak the last, the parting word,
Which, when all other sounds decay,
  Is still like distant music heard;—
That tender farewell on the shore
Of this rude world, when all is o'er,
Which cheers the spirit, ere its bark
Puts off into the unknown Dark.

Deserted youth! one thought alone
  Shed joy around his soul in death—
That she, whom he for years had known,
And lov'd, and might have call'd his own,
  Was safe from this foul midnight's breath,—
Safe in her father's princely halls,
Where the cool airs from fountain falls,
Freshly perfum'd by many a brand
Of the sweet wood from India's land,
Were pure as she whose brow they fann'd.

But see—who yonder comes by stealth,
  This melancholy bower to seek,

Like a young envoy, sent by Health,
With rosy gifts upon her cheek?
'Tis she—far off, through moonlight dim
He knew his own betrothèd bride,
She, who would rather die with him,
Than live to gain the world beside!—
Her arms are round her lover now,
His livid cheek to hers she presses,
And dips, to bind his burning brow,
In the cool lake her loosen'd tresses.
Ah! once, how little did he think
An hour would come, when he should shrink
With horror from that dear embrace,
Those gentle arms, that were to him
Holy as is the cradling place
Of Eden's infant cherubim!
And now he yields—now turns away,
Shuddering as if the venom lay
All in those proffer'd lips alone—
Those lips that, then so fearless grown,
Never until that instant came
Near his unask'd or without shame.
"Oh! let me only breathe the air,
The blessed air, that's breath'd by thee,
And, whether on its wings it bear
Healing or death, 'tis sweet to me!
There—drink my tears, while yet they fall—
Would that my bosom's blood were balm,
And, well thou know'st, I'd shed it all,
To give thy brow one minute's calm.
Nay, turn not from me that dear face—
Am I not thine—thy own lov'd bride—
The one, the chosen one, whose place
In life or death is by thy side?

Think'st thou that she, whose only light,
In this dim world, from thee hath shone,
Could bear the long, the cheerless night,
That must be hers when thou art gone?
That I can live, and let thee go,
Who art my life itself?—No, no—
When the stem dies, the leaf that grew
Out of its heart must perish too!
Then turn to me, my own love, turn,
Before, like thee, I fade and burn;
Cling to these yet cool lips, and share
The last pure life that lingers there!"

She fails—she sinks—as dies the lamp
In charnel airs, or cavern-damp,
So quickly do his baleful sighs
Quench all the sweet light of her eyes.
One struggle—and his pain is past—
Her lover is no longer living!
One kiss the maiden gives, one last,
Long kiss, which she expires in giving!

"Sleep," said the Peri, as softly she stole
The farewell sigh of that vanishing soul,
As true as e'er warm'd a woman's breast—
"Sleep on, in visions of odour rest,
In balmier airs than ever yet stirr'd
Th' enchanted pile of that lonely bird,
Who sings at the last his own death lay,
And in music and perfume dies away!"

Thus saying, from her lips she spread
Unearthly breathings through the place,

And shook her sparkling wreath, and shed
Such lustre o'er each paly face,
That like two lovely saints they seem'd,
Upon the eve of doomsday taken
From their dim graves, in odour sleeping;
While that benevolent Peri beam'd
Like their good angel calmly keeping
Watch o'er them till their souls would waken.

But morn is blushing in the sky;
Again the Peri soars above,
Bearing to Heav'n that precious sigh
Of pure, self-sacrificing love.
High throbb'd her heart, with hope elate,
The Elysian palm she soon shall win,
For the bright Spirit at the gate
Smil'd as she gave that offering in;
And she already hears the trees
Of Eden, with their crystal bells
Ringing in that ambrosial breeze
That from the throne of Alla swells;
And she can see the starry bowls
That lie around that lucid lake,
Upon whose banks admitted Souls
Their first sweet draught of glory take!

But ah! even Peris' hopes are vain—
Again the Fates forbade, again
Th' immortal barrier clos'd—"Not yet,"
The Angel said as, with regret,
He shut from her that glimpse of glory—
"True was the maiden, and her story,
Written in light o'er Alla's head,
By seraph eyes shall long be read.

But, Peri, see—the crystal bar
Of Eden moves not—holier far
Than ev'n this sigh the boon must be
That opes the Gates of Heav'n for thee."

Now, upon Syria's land of roses
Softly the light of Eve reposes,
And, like a glory, the broad sun
Hangs over sainted Lebanon;
Whose head in wintry grandeur towers,
And whitens with eternal sleet,
While summer, in a vale of flowers,
Is sleeping rosy at his feet.

To one, who look'd from upper air
O'er all th' enchanted regions there,
How beauteous must have been the glow,
The life, the sparkling from below!
Fair gardens, shining streams, with ranks
Of golden melons on their banks,
More golden where the sun-light falls;—
Gay lizards, glittering on the walls
Of ruin'd shrines, busy and bright,
As they were all alive with light;
And, yet more splendid, numerous flocks
Of pigeons, settling on the rocks,
With their rich restless wings, that gleam
Variously in the crimson beam
Of the warm West,—as if inlaid
With brilliants from the mine, or made
Of tearless rainbows, such as span
Th' unclouded skies of Peristan.
And then the mingling sounds that come,
Of shepherd's ancient reed, with hum

Of the wild bees of Palestine,
Banqueting through the flowery vales;
And, Jordan, those sweet banks of thine,
And woods, so full of nightingales!

But nought can charm the luckless Peri;
Her soul is sad—her wings are weary—
Joyless she sees the Sun look down
On that great Temple, once his own,[5]
Whose lonely columns stand sublime,
Flinging their shadows from on high,
Like dials, which the wizard, Time,
Had rais'd to count his ages by!

Yet haply there may lie conceal'd
Beneath those Chambers of the Sun,
Some amulet of gems, anneal'd
In upper fires, some tablet seal'd
With the great name of Solomon,
Which, spell'd by her illumin'd eyes,
May teach her where, beneath the moon,
In earth or ocean, lies the boon,
The charm, that can restore so soon
An erring Spirit to the skies.

Cheer'd by this hope she bends her thither;—
Still laughs the radiant eye of Heaven,
Nor have the golden bowers of Even
In the rich West begun to wither;—
When, o'er the vale of Balbec winging
Slowly, she sees a child at play,
Among the rosy wild-flowers singing,
As rosy and as wild as they;
Chasing, with eager hands and eyes,

The beautiful blue-damsel flies,
That flutter'd round the jasmine stems,
Like wingèd flowers or flying gems:—
And, near the boy, who tir'd with play
Now nestling 'mid the roses lay,
She saw a wearied man dismount
From his hot steed, and on the brink
Of a small imaret's rustic fount
Impatient fling him down to drink.
Then swift his haggard brow he turn'd
To the fair child, who fearless sat,
Though never yet hath day-beam burn'd
Upon a brow more fierce than that,—
Sullenly fierce—a mixture dire,
Like thunder-clouds, of gloom and fire;
In which the Peri's eye could read
Dark tales of many a ruthless deed;
The ruin'd maid—the shrine profan'd—
Oaths broken—and the threshold stain'd
With blood of guests!—*there* written, all,
Black as the damning drops that fall
From the denouncing Angel's pen,
Ere Mercy weeps them out again!

Yet tranquil now that man of crime
(As if the balmy evening time
Soften'd his spirit) look'd and lay,
Watching the rosy infant's play:—
Though still, whene'er his eye by chance
Fell on the boy's, its lurid glance
Met that unclouded, joyous gaze,
As torches, that have burnt all night
Through some impure and godless rite,
Encounter morning's glorious rays.

But hark! the vesper call to prayer,
As slow the orb of daylight sets,
Is rising sweetly on the air,
From Syria's thousand minarets!
The boy has started from the bed
Of flowers, where he had laid his head,
And down upon the fragrant sod
Kneels, with his forehead to the south,
Lisping th' eternal name of God
From Purity's own cherub mouth,
And looking, while his hands and eyes
Are lifted to the glowing skies,
Like a stray babe of Paradise,
Just lighted on that flowery plain,
And seeking for its home again.

Oh, 'twas a sight—that Heav'n—that child—
A scene, which might have well beguil'd
Ev'n haughty Eblis of a sigh
For glories lost and peace gone by!

And how felt *he*, the wretched Man
Reclining there—while memory ran
O'er many a year of guilt and strife,
Flew o'er the dark flood of his life,
Nor found one sunny resting-place,
Nor brought him back one branch of grace?
"There *was* a time," he said, in mild,
Heart-humbled tones—"thou blessed child!
When, young and haply pure as thou,
I look'd and pray'd like thee—but now—"
He hung his head—each nobler aim
And hope and feeling, which had slept
From boyhood's hour, that instant came
Fresh o'er him, and he wept—he wept!

Blest tears of soul-felt penitence!
In whose benign, redeeming flow
Is felt the first, the only sense
Of guiltless joy that guilt can know.
"There's a drop," said the Peri, "that down from the moon
Falls through the withering airs of June
Upon Egypt's land, of so healing a power,
So balmy a virtue, that ev'n in the hour
That drop descends, contagion dies,
And health re-animates earth and skies!—
Oh, is it not thus, thou man of sin,
The precious tears of repentance fall?
Though foul thy fiery plagues within,
One heavenly drop hath dispell'd them all!"

And now—behold him kneeling there
By the child's side, in humble prayer,
While the same sunbeam shines upon
The guilty and the guiltless one,
And hymns of joy proclaim through Heaven
The triumph of a Soul Forgiven!

'Twas when the golden orb had set,
While on their knees they linger'd yet,
There fell a light more lovely far
Than ever came from sun or star,
Upon the tear that, warm and meek,
Dew'd that repentant sinner's cheek.
To mortal eye this light might seem
A northern flash or meteor beam—
But well th' enraptured Peri knew
'Twas a bright smile the Angel threw
From Heaven's gate, to hail that tear
Her harbinger of glory near!

"Joy, joy for ever! my task is done—
The Gates are pass'd, and Heaven is won!
Oh! am I not happy? I am, I am—
To thee, sweet Eden! how dark and sad
Are the diamond turrets of Shadukiam,[6]
And the fragrant bowers of Amberabad!

"Farewell, ye odours of Earth, that die,
Passing away like a lover's sigh;—
My feast is now of the Tooba Tree,[7]
Whose scent is the breath of Eternity!

"Farewell, ye vanishing flowers, that shone
In my fairy wreath, so bright and brief;—
Oh! what are the brightest that e'er have blown,
To the lote-tree, springing by Alla's throne,[8]
Whose flowers have a soul in every leaf!
Joy, joy for ever!—my task is done—
The Gates are pass'd, and Heav'n is won!"

II.

THE FIRE WORSHIPPERS.

(A SELECTION.)

She loves—but knows not whom she loves,
  Nor what his race, nor whence he came;—
Like one who meets, in Indian groves,
  Some beauteous bird, without a name,
Brought by the last ambrosial breeze,
From isles in the undiscover'd seas,
To show his plumage for a day
To wondering eyes, and wing away!
Will *he* thus fly—her nameless lover?
  Alla forbid! 'twas by a moon
As fair as this, while singing over
  Some ditty to her soft Kanoon,
Alone, at this same witching hour,
  She first beheld his radiant eyes
Gleam through the lattice of the bower,
  Where nightly now they mix their sighs;
And thought some spirit of the air
(For what could waft a mortal there?)
Was pausing on his moonlight way
To listen to her lonely lay!
This fancy ne'er hath left her mind:
  And—though, when terror's swoon had past,
She saw a youth, of mortal kind,
  Before her in obeisance cast,—
Yet often since, when he hath spoken
Strange, awful words,—and gleams have broken
From his dark eyes, too bright to bear,

Oh! she hath fear'd her soul was given
To some unhallow'd child of air,
Some erring Spirit, cast from heaven,
Like those angelic youths of old,
Who burn'd for maids of mortal mould,
Bewilder'd left the glorious skies,
And lost their heaven for woman's eyes!
Fond girl! nor fiend nor angel he,
Who woos thy young simplicity;
But one of earth's impassion'd sons,
As warm in love, as fierce in ire
As the best heart whose current runs
Full of the Day-god's living fire!

But quench'd to-night that ardour seems,
And pale his cheek, and sunk his brow;—
Never before, but in her dreams,
Had she beheld him pale as now:
And those were dreams of troubled sleep,
From which 'twas joy to wake and weep;
Visions, that will not be forgot,
But sadden every waking scene,
Like warning ghosts, that leave the spot
All wither'd where they once have been!

"How sweetly," said the trembling maid,
Of her own gentle voice afraid,
So long had they in silence stood,
Looking upon that tranquil flood—
"How sweetly does the moonbeam smile
To-night upon yon leafy isle!
Oft, in my fancy's wanderings,
I've wish'd that little isle had wings,
And we, within its fairy bowers,

Were wafted off to seas unknown,
Where not a pulse should beat but ours,
And we might live, love, die alone!
Far from the cruel and the cold,—
Where the bright eyes of angels only
Should come around us, to behold
A paradise so pure and lonely.
Would this be world enough for thee?"
Playful she turn'd, that he might see
The passing smile her cheek put on;
But when she mark'd how mournfully
His eyes met hers, that smile was gone;
And, bursting into heart-felt tears,
"Yes, yes," she cried, "my hourly fears,
My dreams, have boded all too right—
We part—for ever part—to-night!—
I knew, I knew it *could* not last—
'Twas bright, 'twas heavenly, but 'tis past!
Oh! ever thus, from childhood's hour,
I've seen my fondest hopes decay;
I never loved a tree or flower,
But 'twas the first to fade away.
I never nurs'd a dear gazelle,
To glad me with its soft black eye,
But when it came to know me well,
And love me, it was sure to die!
Now too—the joy most like divine
Of all I ever dreamt or knew,
To see thee, hear thee, call thee mine,—
Oh, misery! must I lose *that* too?
Yet go—on peril's brink we meet;—
Those frightful rocks—that treacherous sea—
No, never come again—though sweet,
Though heaven, it may be death to thee.

Farewell—and blessings on thy way,
Where'er thou go'st, beloved stranger!
Better to sit and watch that ray,
And think thee safe, though far away,
Than have thee near me, and in danger!"

"Danger! oh, tempt me not to boast—"
The youth exclaim'd—"thou little know'st
What he can brave, who, born and nurst
In Danger's paths, has dar'd her worst!
Upon whose ear the signal-word
Of strife and death is hourly breaking;
Who sleeps with head upon the sword
His fever'd hand must grasp in waking!
Danger!——"
"Say on—thou fear'st not then,
And we may meet—oft meet again?"

"Oh! look not so,—beneath the skies
I now fear nothing but those eyes.
If aught on earth could charm or force
My spirit from its destin'd course,—
If aught could make this soul forget
The bond to which its seal is set,
'Twould be those eyes;—they, only they,
Could melt that sacred seal away!
But no—'tis fix'd—*my* awful doom
Is fix'd—on this side of the tomb
We meet no more—why, why did Heaven
Mingle two souls that earth has riven,
Has rent asunder, wide as ours?
O Arab maid! as soon the powers
Of Light and Darkness may combine,
As I be link'd with thee or thine!

Thy Father——"
"Holy Alla save
His grey head from that lightning glance!
Thou know'st him not—he loves the brave;
Nor lives there under heaven's expanse
One who would prize, would worship thee,
And thy bold spirit, more than he.
Oft when, in childhood, I have play'd
With the bright falchion by his side,
I've heard him swear his lisping maid
In time should be a warrior's bride.
And still, whene'er, at Haram hours,
I take him cool sherbets and flowers,
He tells me, when in playful mood,
A hero shall my bridegroom be,
Since maids are best in battle woo'd
And won with shouts of victory!
Nay, turn not from me—thou alone
Art form'd to make both hearts thy own.
Go—join his sacred ranks—thou know'st
Th' unholy strife these Persians wage:-
Good Heaven, that frown!—even now thou glow'st
With more than mortal warrior's rage.
Haste to the camp by morning's light,
And, when that sword is raised in fight,
Oh, still remember, Love and I
Beneath its shadow trembling lie!
One victory o'er those Slaves of Fire,
Those impious Ghebers, whom my sire
Abhors——"

"Hold, hold—thy words are death—"
The stranger cried, as wild he flung
His mantle back, and show'd beneath
The Gheber belt[9] that round him clung.—

"Here, maiden, look—weep—blush to see
All that thy sire abhors in me!
Yes—*I* am of that impious race,
Those Slaves of Fire, who morn and even,
Hail their Creator's dwelling-place
Among the living lights of heaven!
Yes—*I* am of that outcast few,
To Iran and to vengeance true,
Who curse the hour your Arabs came
To desolate our shrines of flame,
And swear, before God's burning eye,
To break our country's chains or die!
Thy bigot sire—nay, tremble not—
He, who gave birth to those dear eyes,
With me is sacred as the spot
From which our fires of worship rise!
But know—'twas he I sought that night,
When, from my watch-boat on the sea,
I caught this turret's glimmering light,
And up the rude rocks desperately
Rush'd to my prey—thou know'st the rest—
I climb'd the gory vulture's nest,
And found a trembling dove within;—
Thine, thine the victory—thine the sin—
If Love hath made one thought his own,
That vengeance claims first—last—alone!
Oh! had we never, never met,
Or could this heart e'en now forget
How link'd, how bless'd, we might have been,
Had fate not frown'd so dark between!
Hadst thou been born a Persian maid,
In neighbouring valleys had we dwelt,
Through the same fields in childhood play'd,
At the same kindling altar knelt,—

Then, then, while all those nameless ties,
In which the charm of Country lies,
Had round our hearts been hourly spun,
Till Iran's cause and thine were one;—
While in thy lute's awakening sigh
I heard the voice of days gone by,
And saw, in every smile of thine
Returning hours of glory shine!—
While the wrong'd Spirit of our Land
Liv'd, look'd, and spoke her wrongs through thee,—
God! who could then this sword withstand?
Its very flash were victory!
But now—estrang'd, divorc'd for ever
Far as the grasp of Fate can sever;
Our only ties what love has wove,—
In faith, friends, country, sunder'd wide:—
And then, then only, true to love,
When false to all that's dear beside!
Thy father Iran's deadliest foe—
Thyself, perhaps, e'en now—but no—
Hate never look'd so lovely yet!
No—sacred to thy soul will be
The land of him who could forget
All but that bleeding land for thee!
When other eyes shall see, unmoved,
Her widows mourn, her warriors fall,
Thou'lt think how well one Gheber lov'd,
And for *his* sake thou'lt weep for all!
But look——"

With sudden start he turn'd
And pointed to the distant wave,
Where lights, like charnel meteors, burn'd
Bluely, as o'er some seaman's grave;

And fiery darts, at intervals,[10]
Flew up all sparkling from the main,
As if each star that nightly falls,
Were shooting back to heaven again.

"My signal-lights!—I must away—
Both, both are ruin'd if I stay.
Farewell—sweet life! thou cling'st in vain—
Now—Vengeance,—I am thine again."
Fiercely he broke away nor stopp'd,
Nor look'd—but from the lattice dropp'd
Down 'mid the pointed crags beneath,
As if he fled from love to death.
While pale and mute young Hinda stood,
Nor moved, till in the silent flood
A momentary plunge below
Startled her from her trance of woe;—
Shrieking she to the lattice flew,
"I come—I come—if in that tide
Thou sleep'st to-night—I'll sleep there too,
In death's cold wedlock, by thy side.
Oh! I would ask no happier bed
Than the chill wave my love lies under;—
Sweeter to rest together dead,
Far sweeter, than to live asunder!"
But no—their hour is not yet come—
Again she sees his pinnace fly,
Wafting him fleetly to his home,
Where'er that ill-starr'd home may lie;
And calm and smooth it seem'd to win
Its moonlight way before the wind,
As if it bore all peace within,
Nor left one breaking heart behind!

NOTES

TO POEMS BY THOMAS MOORE.

1 "The Mahometans suppose that falling stars are the firebrands wherewith the good angels drive away the bad, when they approach too near the verge of the heavens."—Fryer.

2 The Forty Pillars; so the Persians call the ruins of Persepolis. It is imagined by them that this palace, and the edifices at Balbec, were built by genii, for the purpose of hiding in their subterraneous caverns immense treasures, which still remain there.—D'Herbelot, Volney.

3 The Isles of Panchaia.

4 The cup of Jamshid, discovered, they say, when digging for the foundations of Persepolis."—Richardson.

5 The Temple of the Sun at Balbec.

6 The Country of Delight—the name of a province in the kingdom of Jinnistan, or Fairy Land, the capital of which is called the City of Jewels. Amberabad is another of the cities of Jinnistan.

7 The tree Tooba, that stands in Paradise in the palace of Mahomet.—Sale's Prelim. Disc.—"Tooba," says D'Herbelot, "signifies beatitude, or eternal happiness."

8 Mahomet is described, in the 53rd chapter of the Koran, as having seen the angel Gabriel "by the lote-tree, beyond which there is no passing: near it is the Garden of Eternal Abode." This tree, say the commentators, stands in the seventh heaven, on the right hand of the Throne of God.

9 "The Ghebers lay so much stress on their cushee or girdle, as not to dare to be an instant without it."—Grose's *Voyage*.

10 "The Mameluks, when it was dark used to shoot up a sort of fiery arrow into the air, which in some measure resembled lightning or falling stars."—Baumgarten.

Ebenezer Elliott.

1781—1849.

Most, if not all, of the progressive movements of the nineteenth century, have found expression in literature and voice in song. Ebenezer Elliott, known as the "Corn Law Rhymer," may be said to have been the earliest of the political poets of the people, and his "Corn Law Rhymes" may be regarded as the literary progenitors of the "Songs of Democracy" of Ernest Jones, the "Songs of the Governing Classes" of Robert Brough, if not of the "Songs for Socialists" of William Morris. That Elliott was more than a political poet is undoubtedly true, and that he suffered as a poet from his devotion to political causes is also clear; but this was because the extreme sensibility which made him a poet of nature, made him also a man of the people, and carried him beyond the line of beauty in his scorn of social selfishness and his denunciation of political wrong. Born at Masborough, in Yorkshire, in 1781, Ebenezer Elliott became early accustomed to the poverty and privation common to the labouring classes of his time. His father was a clerk in an ironworks, with an income of £70 a year, a sum which proved, alas! insufficient to keep him out of bankruptcy; and the poet had to depend upon himself for all education beyond that afforded by the national school. Though, according to his own account, a dull scholar, he early acquired an

intelligent knowledge and love of nature, and applied himself to the study of botany with affectionate zeal.

Thomson's "Seasons," which is credited with the inspiration of John Clare, Robert Bloomfield, and many other nature poets, first "fired his vocal rage," and his earliest attempt at versification was an imitation in rhyme of Thomson's "Thunderstorm." This induced the studying of other poets, and Barrow, Young, Shenstone, and Milton became his constant companions. His first published poem, "The Vernal Walk," was written about 1797-8, the period of the "Lyrical Ballads" of Wordsworth and Coleridge, and the "Farmer's Boy" of Robert Bloomfield. This was followed by a long period of silence occasioned by his devotion to business. A partnership in a Rotherham firm proved a failure, and in 1821 the poet borrowed some capital and started as an ironworker in Sheffield, a venture which was crowned with success. In 1823 appeared "Love," a poem, which was followed, about 1827, by "The Ranter," the first of his political poems—again issued, bound up with the "Corn Law Rhymes," in the following year. His next work, "The Village Patriarch," was published in 1829. These later works attracted considerable notice. Southey, always ready to hold out a helping hand to struggling talent, became a friend, and Dr. Bowring brought the "Rhymer" under the notice of Wordsworth and Bulwer. This introduction proved of great service to the poet, Bulwer opening to him the columns of the *New Monthly Magazine*, in which he soon distinguished himself as an original and powerful writer. In 1838 he took part in the organisation of the Chartist movement, from which however he

withdrew two years later in consequence of its opposition to the Anti-Corn Law League. He was never tired of denouncing the "bread-tax," as he was accustomed to designate the "Corn Laws," and the vividness with which he painted the miseries incident to their operation had some share in their overthrow. In 1841 he was able to retire to a small estate which he had purchased at Argilt Hill near Barnsley, where he died in the year 1849.

Elliott was first a poet of nature, and secondly a poet of politics. "It was not the bread-tax," says Professor Dowden, "that first made him a poet, but a picture of a primrose in Sowerby's 'English Botany;' this sent him to country lanes, the stream-side, and the moor, and he found his friends in the dragon-fly, the kingfisher, the green snake, and the nightingales of Basingthorpe Spring." The beauties of the landscape were a never-failing delight to him, "the wonders of the lane" an inexhaustible source of loving and worshipful study. Though lacking the deep philosophic insight of Wordsworth, he might surely have sung with him—

> "To me the meanest flower that blows can give
> Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

In his more ambitious efforts he showed the same inability to maintain the "even wing" of lofty inspiration that is characteristic of Wordsworth's "Excursion." There are fine passages, but they often lead to tangled wildernesses and dull uninteresting plains. A want of taste often annoys, and an absence of restraint frequently spoils bright and happy pictures. He was a true poet of nature and a true friend of man, and had he but marked a fair

division in his services he might have rendered nature more permanent honour, while serving his generation none the less. When he came to write politically, his style assumed a stern directness, a simple severity, and withal a bitterness of irony which make his voice unique. His heart was like the sea anemone, that, warmed by the summer sun, unfolds its wealth of colour in the rock-pool by the sea; but touched by the rude hand of man shrinks into unloveliness, and clings with grim fierceness to the rock. And yet even when stung into concentration by the reflection of "what man has made of man," his bitterness is that of a tender heart wrought upon by evils which it cannot ignore, but which it feels itself powerless to overcome. "My feelings have been hammered until they have become 'cold-short,' and are apt to snap and fly off in sarcasms," he wrote; and again,—

> "My heart, once soft as woman's tear, is gnarled
> With gloating on the ills I cannot cure."

Carlyle spoke of his poems as "Hues of joy and harmony, painted out of troublous tears;" and surely this is a description of all song "made perfect through suffering." Eminently sympathetic, it was impossible for Ebenezer Elliott to see suffering without sharing it, and sharing it he appropriated the resentment of the original sufferer, and in a very real sense made his brother's cause his own. Had his lot been cast in more congenial places and in happier times, he would have put more sunshine in his songs, but literature would have lost some of the most passionate and powerful of its political poetry.

ALFRED H. MILES.

LOVE.

1823.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

(Selection from Book I.)

WHAT marvel, Laura, if thy minstrel shun
The peopled waste, the loneliness of crowds?
I love the streams, that mirror as they run
The voiceless clouds.

The stillness of Almighty Power is here,
And Solitude—the present Deity—
Throned on the hills that meet the bending sphere,
How silently!

Oh, look around thee! On those rocks sublime,
Th' impression of eternal feet is seen!
These mountains are the eldest-born of Time,
Still young and green!

What nobler home, what holier company
For Love and Thought, than forests and the heath,
Where life's Great Cause, in his sublimity,
Dwells lone as Death?

What scene more fit than this, though wild and drear,
With Heav'n, the universal sea, above,
To prompt the song most sweet to lady's ear—
The lay of Love?

Hear'st thou the murmur of the living rill,
That ever seeks the valley, green and still,
Gliding from view, love-listening groves between,
And most melodious when it flows unseen?

What though, at times, the sun in wrath retire,
And o'er its course the clouds dissolve in fire?
Soon bend the skies in brighter beauty fair,
And see, where'er it flows, their image there.
Softly it steals beneath the lucid sky;
So, Love's lone stream steals to eternity.
How the flowers freshen where the waters glide,
And seem to listen to the limpid tide!
So bless'd is he whose life serenely flows,
Reflecting golden clouds, and many a rose.
He hears Heav'n's voice in every warbling grove,
And sees in every flower the smile of Love.

Love! eldest Muse! Time heard thine earliest lay
When light through Heav'n led forth the new-born day.
The stars, that give no accent to the wind,
Are golden odes and music to the mind;
So, passion's thrill is Nature's minstrelsy;
So, to the young heart, Love is poetry.
God of the soul! illumination, caught
From thy bright glance, is energy to thought;
And song, bereft of thee, is cold and tame,
The bard a cinder, uninstinct with flame.
But when the heart looks through the eyes of Love
On Nature's form, things lifeless breathe and move;—
The dewy forest smiles, dim morning shakes
The rainbow from his plumage, music wakes
The dimpled ripple of the azure wave,
In fiery floods green hills their tresses lave,
And myriad flowers all bright'ning from the dews,
Day's earth-born stars, their golden beams effuse:
Transported passion bids rocks, floods, and skies
Burst into song, while her delighted eyes
To all they see their own rich hues impart;
And the heart's language speaks to every heart.

THE RANTER.

1827.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

(THE OPENING LINES.)

I.

MILES GORDON sleeps; his six days' labour done,
He dreams of Sunday, verdant fields, and prayer:
O rise, bless'd morn, unclouded! Let thy sun
Shine on the artisan—thy purest air
Breathe on the bread-tax'd labourer's deep despair!
Poor sons of toil! I grudge them not the breeze
That plays with Sabbath flowers, the clouds that play
With Sabbath winds, the hum of Sabbath bees,
The Sabbath walk, the skylark's Sabbath lay,
The silent sunshine of the Sabbath day.

II.

The stars wax pale, the moon is cold and dim;
Miles Gordon wakes, and grey dawn tints the skies:
The many-childed widow, who to him
Is as a mother, hears her lodger rise,
And listens to his prayer with swimming eyes.
For her and for her orphans poor he prays,
For all who earn the bread they daily eat:—
"Bless them, O God, with useful, happy days,
With hearts that scorn all meanness and deceit;
And round their lowly hearths let freemen meet!"—
This morn, betimes, she hastes to leave her bed,
For he must preach beneath th' autumnal tree:
She lights her fire, and soon the board is spread
With Sabbath coffee, toast, and cups for three.

Pale he descends; again she starts to see
His hollow cheek, and feels they soon must part!
But they shall meet again—that hope is sure;
And, Oh! she venerates his mind and heart,
For he is pure, if mortal e'er was pure!
His words, his silence, teach her to endure!
And then, he helps to feed her orphan'd five!
O God! thy judgments cruel seem to be!
While bad men biggen long, and cursing thrive,
The good, like wintry sun-beams, fade and flee—
That we may follow *them*, and come to thee.

III.

In haste she turns, and climbs the narrow stair,
To wake her eldest born, but, pausing, stands,
Bent o'er his bed; for on his forehead bare,
Like jewels ring'd on sleeping beauty's hands,
Tired labour's gems are set in beaded bands;
And none, none, none, like bread-tax'd labour know'th
How more than grateful are his slumbers brief.
Thou dost not know, thou pamper'd son of sloth!
Thou canst not tell, thou bread tax-eating thief!
How sweet is rest to bread-tax'd toil and grief!
Like sculpture, or like death, serene he lies.
But, no, that tear is not a marble tear!
He names, in sleep, his father's injuries;
And now, in silence, wears a smile severe.
How like his sire he looks, when drawing near
His journey's close, and that fair form bent o'er
His dark'ning cheek, still faintly tinged with red,
And fondly gazed—too soon to gaze no more!—
While her long tresses, o'er the seeming dead,
Stream'd, in their black profusion, from the head
Of matron loveliness—more touchingly,

More sadly beautiful, and pale, and still—
A shape of half-divine humanity,
Worthy of Chantrey's steel, or Milton's quill,
Or heaven-taught Raphael's soul-expressing skill!
And must she wake that poor, o'er-labour'd youth?
Oh, yes, or Edmund will his mother chide;
For he, this morn, would hear the words of truth
From lips inspired, on Shirecliffe's lofty side,
Gazing o'er tree and tower on Hallam wide.
Up, sluggards, up! the mountains one by one,
Ascend in light; and slow the mists retire
From vale and plain. The cloud on Stannington
Beholds a rocket—No, 'tis Morthen spire!
The sun is risen! cries Stanedge, tipp'd with fire;
On Norwood's flowers the dew-drops shine and shake;
Up, sluggards, up! and drink the morning breeze.
The birds on cloud-left Osgathorpe awake;
And Wincobank is waving all his trees
O'er subject towns, and farms, and villages,
And gleaming streams, and woods, and waterfalls.
Up, climb the oak-crown'd summit! Hoober Stand
And Keppel's Pillar gaze on Wentworth's halls,
And misty lakes, that brighten and expand,
And distant hills, that watch the western strand.
Up! trace God's foot-prints, where they paint the mould
With heav'nly green, and hues that blush and glow
Like angel's wings; while skies of blue and gold
Stoop to Miles Gordon on the mountain's brow.
Behold the Great Unpaid! the prophet, lo!
Sublime he stands beneath the Gospel tree,
And Edmund stands on Shirecliffe at his side;
Behind him, sinks, and swells, and spreads a sea
Of hills, and vales, and groves; before him glide
Don, Rivelin, Loxley, wandering in their pride

From heights that mix their azure with the cloud;
Beneath him, spire and dome are glittering;
And round him press his flock, a woe-worn crowd.
To other words, while forest echoes ring,
"Ye banks and braes o' bonny Doon," they sing;
And, far below, the drover, with a start
Awaking, listens to the well-known strain,
Which brings Shihallian's shadow to his heart,
And Scotia's loneliest vales; then sleeps again,
And dreams, on Loxley's Banks, of Dunsinane.
The hymn they sing is to their preacher dear;
It breathes of hopes and glories grand and vast,
While on his face they look, with grief and fear;
Full well they know his sands are ebbing fast;
But, hark! he speaks, and feels he speaks his last!—

IV.

"Woe be unto you, scribes and pharisees,
Who eat the widow's and the orphan's bread,
And make long prayers to hide your villainies,
Said He who had not where to lay his head;
And wandering forth, while blew the Sabbath breeze,
Pluck'd ears of corn, with humble men, like these.
God blames not him who toils six days in seven,
Where smoke and dust bedim the golden day,
If he delight, beneath the dome of heaven,
To hear the winds, and see the clouds at play,
Or climb his hills, amid their flowers to pray.

* * * * * *

We hate not the religion of bare walls;
We scorn not the *cathedral'd* pomp of prayer;
For sweet are all our Father's festivals,
If contrite hearts the heavenly banquet share,
In field or temple: God is everywhere!"

CORN LAW RHYMES.

ETC., ETC.

1827—8.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

I.—CHILD, IS THY FATHER DEAD?

Tune—"Robin Adair."

CHILD, is thy father dead?
Father is gone!
Why did they tax his bread?
God's will be done!
Mother has sold her bed;
Better to die than wed!
Where shall she lay her head?
Home we have none!

Father clamm'd thrice a week,
God's will be done!
Long for work did he seek,
Work he found none.
Tears on his hollow cheek
Told what no tongue could speak:
Why did his master break?
God's will be done!

Doctor said air was best,
Food we had none;
Father, with panting breast,
Groan'd to be gone:
Now he is with the blest—
Mother says death is best!
We have no place of rest—
Yes, ye have one!

II.—BATTLE SONG.

DAY, like our souls, is fiercely dark;
What then? 'Tis day!
We sleep no more; the cock crows—hark!
To arms! away!
They come! they come! the knell is rung
Of us or them;
Wide o'er their march the pomp is flung
Of gold and gem.
What collar'd hound of lawless sway,
To famine dear—
What pension'd slave of Attila,
Leads in the rear?
Come they from Scythian wilds afar,
Our blood to spill?
Wear they the livery of the Czar?
They do his will.
Nor tassell'd silk, nor epaulet,
Nor plume, nor torse—
No splendour gilds, all sternly met,
Our foot and horse.
But, dark and still, we inly glow,
Condens'd in ire!
Strike, tawdry slaves, and ye shall know
Our gloom is fire.
In vain your pomp, ye evil powers,
Insults the land;
Wrongs, vengeance, and *the cause* are ours,
And God's right hand!
Madmen! they trample into snakes
The wormy clod!
Like fire, beneath their feet awakes
The sword of God!

Behind, before, above, below,
They rouse the brave;
Where'er they go, they make a foe,
Or find a grave.

III.—SONG.

Tune—"Scots wha hae," etc.

OTHERS march in freedom's van;
Canst not thou what others can?
Thou a Briton! thou a man!
What are worms, if human thou?

Wilt thou, deaf to hiss and groan,
Breed white slaves for every zone?
Make yon robber feed his own,
Then proclaim thyself a man.

Still shall paltry tyrants tell
Freemen when to buy and sell?
Spurn the coward thought to hell!
Tell the miscreants what they are.

Dost thou cringe, that fiends may scowl?
Wert thou born without a soul?
Spaniels *feed*, are whipp'd, and howl;
Spaniel! thou art *starved* and whipp'd.

Wilt thou still feed palaced knaves?
Shall thy sons be traitors' slaves?
Shall they sleep in workhouse-graves?
Shall they toil for parish-pay?

Wherefore did'st thou woo and wed?
Why a bride was Mary led?
Shall she, dying, curse thy bed?
Tyrants! tyrants! no, by heaven!

IV.—A POET'S PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY Father! let thy lowly child,
Strong in his love of truth, be wisely bold,—
A patriot bard, by sycophants revil'd,
Let him live usefully and not die old!
Let poor men's children, pleas'd to read his lays,
Love, for his sake, the scenes where he hath been;
And, when he ends his pilgrimage of days,
Let him be buried where the grass is green;
Where daisies, blooming earliest, linger late
To hear the bee his busy note prolong:—
There let him slumber, and in peace await
The dawning morn, far from the sensual throng,
Who scorn the wind-flow'rs blush, the red-breast's
lonely song.

V.—THE PEOPLE'S ANTHEM.

WHEN wilt Thou save the people?
O God of mercy, when?
Not kings and lords, but nations!
Not thrones and crowns, but men!
Flowers of thy heart, O God, are they;
Let them not pass, like weeds away—
Their heritage a sunless day.
God save the people!

Shall crime bring crime for ever,
Strength aiding still the strong?
Is it thy will, O Father,
That man shall toil for wrong?

"No!" say thy mountains; "No!" thy skies;
Man's clouded sun shall brightly rise,
And songs be heard instead of sighs.
God save the people!

When wilt Thou save the people?
O God of mercy, when?
The people, Lord, the people!
Not thrones and crowns, but men!
God save the people; thine they are,
Thy children, as thy angels fair;
Save them from bondage and despair!
God save the people!

VI.—A POET'S EPITAPH.

STOP, Mortal! Here thy brother lies,
The Poet of the Poor.
His books were rivers, woods, and skies,
The meadow, and the moor;
His teachers were the torn hearts' wail,
The tyrant, and the slave,
The street, the factory, the jail,
The palace—and the grave!
The meanest thing, earth's feeblest worm,
He fear'd to scorn or hate;
And honour'd in a peasant's form
The equal of the great.
But if he lov'd the rich who make
The poor man's little more;
Ill could he praise the rich who take
From plunder'd labour's store.
A hand to do, a head to plan,
A heart to feel and dare—
Tell man's worst foes, here lies the man
Who drew them as they are.

THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

1829.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

I.

AN EXCURSION.

(SELECTION FROM BOOK V.)

(I.)

COME, Father of the Hamlet! grasp again
Thy stern ash plant, cut when the woods were young;
Come, let us leave the plough-subjected plain,
And rise, with freshen'd hearts, and nerves re-strung,
Into the azure dome, that, haply, hung
O'er thoughtful power, ere suffering had begun.

(II.)

Flowers peep, trees bud, boughs tremble, rivers run:
The redwing saith, it is a glorious morn.
Blue are thy Heavens, thou Highest! and thy sun
Shines without cloud, all fire. How sweetly, borne
On wings of morning o'er the leafless thorn,
The tiny wren's small twitter warbles near!
How swiftly flashes in the stream the trout!
Woodbine! our father's ever-watchful ear
Knows, by thy rustle, that thy leaves are out.
The trailing bramble hath not yet a sprout;
Yet harshly to the wind the wanton prates,
Not with thy smooth lisp, woodbine of the fields!
Thou future treasure of the bee, that waits
Gladly on Thee, Spring's harbinger! when yields

All bounteous earth her odorous flowers, and builds
The nightingale, in beauty's fairest land.

(III.)

Five rivers, like the fingers of a hand,
Flung from black mountains, mingle, and are one
Where sweetest valleys quit the wild and grand,
And eldest forests, o'er the silvan Don,
Bid their immortal brother journey on,
A stately pilgrim, watch'd by all the hills.
Say, shall we wander, where, through warriors' graves,
The infant Yewden, mountain-cradled, trills
Her doric notes? Or, where the Locksley raves
Of broil and battle, and the rocks and caves
Dream yet of ancient days? Or, where the sky
Darkens o'er Rivilin, the clear and cold,
That throws his blue length, like a snake, from high?
Or, where deep azure brightens into gold
O'er Sheaf, that mourns in Eden? Or, where roll'd
On tawny sands, through regions passion-wild,
And groves of love, in jealous beauty dark,
Complains the Porter, Nature's thwarted child,
Born in the waste, like headlong Wiming? Hark!
The pois'd hawk calls thee, Village Patriarch!
He calls thee to his mountains! Up, away!
Up, up, to Stanedge! higher still ascend,
Till kindred rivers, from the summit grey,
To distant seas their course in beauty bend,
And, like the lives of human millions, blend
Disparted waves in one immensity!

II.

SNOWBOUND.

(From Book VI.)

(II.)

Love of the celandine and primrose meek,
Star of the leafless hazel! where art thou?
Where is the windflower, with its modest cheek?
Larch! hast thou dash'd from thy denuded brow
Blossoms, that stole their rose-hues from the glow
Of Even, blushing into dreams of love?
Flowers of the wintry beam and faithless sky!
Gems of the wither'd bank and shadeless grove!
Ye are where he who mourns you soon must lie;
Beneath the shroud ye slumber, tranquilly;
But not for ever. Yet a sudden hour
Shall thaw the spotless mantle of your sleep,
And bid it, melted into thunder, pour
From mountain, waste, and fell, with foamy sweep,
Whelming the flooded plain in ruin deep.
Yes, little silent minstrels of the wild,
Your voiceless song shall touch the heart again!
And shall no morning dawn on Sorrow's child?
Shall buried *mind* for ever mute remain
Beneath the sod, from which your beauteous strain
Shall yet arise in music, felt, not heard?
No! Faith, Hope, Love, Fear, Gladness, Frailty, all,
Forbid that man should perish. Like the bird
That soars and sings in Nature's festival,
Our souls shall rise—and fear no second fall—
Our adoration strike a lyre divine!

WIN-HILL; OR, THE CURSE OF GOD.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

(SELECTED STANZAS.)

(I.)

THIS day, ye mountains! is a holiday;
Not the bless'd Sabbath, yet a day of rest,
Though wrung by cant from sordid men, who pay
Their homage to the god whom cant loves best:
I hallow it to Heaven, and make it bless'd.
Wild Moscar Dell, receive me! headlong Wye,
Let my soul hear thee from the mountain's breast,
Telling thy streamlets, as they leap from high,
That richer, lovelier vales, and nobler hills are nigh!

(II.)

Now quit thy home, thou bread-tax'd Artisan!
Drink air and light, pale victim, while thou may'st!
What dost thou hence, umbrella'd Englishman,
Bound to thy pagod in the streeted waste?
Deem'st thou that God dwells only where thou pray'st?
Come worship here, while clouds the hill-tops kiss!
Death numbereth them who linger where thou stay'st.
Bliss-praying supplicant! why shunn'st thou bliss?
Oh, can ye hope for heaven, and scorn a scene like this?

(III.)

Thy sisters, in the vales left far behind,
Are dead, late-coming Primrose! months ago,
They faded slowly in the pensive wind:
Thou smilest—yes, the happy will do so,
Careless of others' wrongs and others' woe.
Carnation'd childhood's favourite! thou too here?
Ay, roses die, but daisies always grow.
Skeleton Ash! why lag behind the year?
Where Don and Rother meet, no half-clad boughs appear!

(IV.)

Nor there are children of the young year seen;
But tawdry flowers flaunt where they grew, and tell
How soon they died! even as the base and mean
Laugh o'er a good man's grave. But near the well
That never fails, the golden pimpernel
Enjoys the freshness of this Alpine clime;
And violets linger in each deep cool dell,
As lowly virtues of the olden time
Cling to their cottage-homes, and slowly yield to crime.

(V.)

Last windflower! knew'st thou April? Infant June
Sees thee, and reddens at thy modest smile;
And o'er thee still May's chaffinch sings his tune,
Well-pleased thy musing idlesse to beguile,
Where two streams meet beneath thy lonely isle;
And cottony bog-rush, and the antler'd moss,
And the brake's lady cluster round thee, while
Their heads at thee the rising foxgloves toss,
Where gnarl'd and lichen'd oaks the shadow'd torrent cross.

(VI.)

So bad men frown! but can their frowns compel
The cowslip to remain beneath the sod?
Can they prevent the mosses of the dell
From lifting up their tiny hands to God?
No; to the soul these point its far abode,
And humbly tell us what the angels are;
Immortal flowers! as dewdrops on the sod
Pure; or the beams that hymn, from star to star,
The King who paves with suns his wheelless, noiseless car.

(x.)

King of the Peak! Win-Hill! thou, throned and crown'd,
That reign'st o'er many a stream and many a vale!
Star-loved, and meteor-sought, and tempest-found!
Proud centre of a mountain-circle, hail!
The might of man may triumph or may fail;
But, Eldest Brother of the Air and Light,
Firm shalt thou stand when demigods turn pale!
For thou, ere Science dawn'd on Reason's night,
Wast, and wilt be when Mind shall rule all other might.

(xi.)

To be a crown'd and sceptred curse, that makes
Immortals worms! a wolf, that feeds on souls!
One of the names which vengeance whips with snakes
Whose venom cannot die! a king of ghouls,
Whose drink is blood! To be clear-eyed as owls,
Still calling darkness light, and winter spring!
To be a tiger-king, whose mercy growls!
To be of meanest things the vilest thing!
Throned Asp o'er lesser asps! What grub would be a king?

(xii.)

But, crown'd Win-Hill! to be a king like thee!
Older than death! as God's thy calm behest!
Only heaven-rivall'd in thy royalty!
Calling the feeble to thy sheltering breast,
And shaking beauty from thy gorgeous vest,
And loved by every good and happy thing!
With nought beneath thee that thou hast not bless'd,
And nought above thee but the Almighty's wing!
Oh, glorious god-like aim! Who would not be a king?

(xv.)

"Blow, blow, thou breeze of mountain freshness, blow!"
Stronger and fresher still, as we ascend
Strengthen'd and freshen'd, till the land below
Lies like a map!—On! on! those clouds portend
Hail, rain, and fire!—Hark, how the rivers send
Their skyward voices hither, and their words
Of liquid music!—See! how bluely blend
The east moors with the sky!—The lowing herds,
To us, are silent now, and hush'd the songful birds.

(xxi.)

High on the topmost jewel of thy crown,
Win-Hill! I sit bareheaded, ankle-deep,
In tufts of rose-cupp'd bilberries; and look down
On towns that smoke below, and homes that creep
Into the silvery clouds, which far-off keep
Their sultry state! and many a mountain stream,
And many a mountain vale, "and ridgy steep;"
The Peak, and all his mountains, where they gleam
Or frown, remote or near, more distant than they seem!

(xxiv.)

Now expectation listens, mute and pale,
While, ridged with sudden foam, the Derwent brawls;
Arrow-like comes the rain, like fire the hail;
And, hark! Mam-Tor on shuddering Stanage calls!
See, what a frown o'er castled Winnat falls!
Down drops the death-black sky! and Kinderscout,
Conscious of glory, laughs at intervals;
Then lifts his helmet, throws his thunders out,
Bathes all the hills in flame, and hails their stormy shout.

(xxv.)

Hark! how my Titan guards laugh kings to scorn!
See, what a fiery circle girds my state!
Hail Mountains! River-Gatherers! Eldest-born
Of Time and Nature, dreadful, dark, and great!
Whose tempests, wing'd from brows that threaten fate
Cast shadows, blacken'd with intensest light,
Like the despair of angels fallen, that wait
On God's long-sleeping wrath, till roof'd with night,
The seas shall burn like oil, and Death be waked with fright

(xxvi.)

Storm! could I ride on thee, and grasp thy mane,
A bitless bridle, in my unburnt hand;
Like flax consum'd, should fall the bondman's chain,
Like dust, the torturers of each troubled land;
And Poland o'er the prostrate Hun should stand—
Her foot upon his neck, her falchion's hilt
Beneath her ample palm. Then every strand
Should hear her voice: "Our bulwark is rebuilt,
Europe! but who shall gauge the blood these butchers spilt?"

(xxix.)

Oh, Thou, whose whispering is the thunder! Power
Eternal, world-attended, yet alone!
O give, at least, to labour's hopeless hour
That peace, which Thou deny'st not to a stone!
The famine-smitten millions cease to groan;
When wilt Thou hear their mute and long despair?
Lord, help the poor! for they are all thy own.
Wilt Thou not help? did I not hear Thee swear,
That Thou would'st tame the proud, and grant their victims' prayer?

(XXX.)

Methought I saw THEE in the dreams of sleep;
This mountain, Father, groan'd beneath thy heel!
Thy other foot was placed on Kinder's steep;
Before thy face I saw the planets reel,
While earth and skies shone bright as molten steel;
For, under all the stars, Thou took'st thy stand,
And bad'st the ends of heaven behold and feel,
That Thou to all thy worlds had'st stretch'd thine hand,
And curs'd for evermore the Legion-Fiend of Land!

(XXXI.)

"He is accursèd!" said the sons of light,
As in their bowers of bliss they listen'd pale;
"He is accursèd!" said the comets, bright
With joy; and star to star a song of bale
Sang, and sun told to sun the dismal tale,
"He is accursèd!" till the light shall fade
To horror in heaven's courts, and glory veil
Her beams, before the face of Truth betray'd;
"Because he cursed the land, which God a blessing made!

(XXXII.)

"He is accursèd!" said the Prince of Hell;
And—like a Phidian statue, mountain-vast—
Stooping from rocks, black, yet unquenchable,
The pale shade of his faded glory cast
Over the blackness of black fire, aghast—
Black-burning seas, that ever black will burn;
"He is accursèd! and while hell shall last,
Him and his prayer heaven's marble roof will spurn,
Who cursed the blessèd sod, and bade earth's millions mourn!"

NATURE POEMS.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

I.—THE WONDERS OF THE LANE.

STRONG climber of the mountain's side,
Though thou the vale disdain,
Yet walk with me where hawthorns hide
The wonders of the lane.
High o'er the rushy springs of Don
The stormy gloom is roll'd;
The moorland hath not yet put on
His purple, green, and gold.
But here the titling spreads his wing,
Where dewy daisies gleam;
And here the sun-flower of the spring
Burns bright in morning's beam.
To mountain winds the famish'd fox
Complains that Sol is slow,
O'er headlong steeps and gushing rocks
His royal robe to throw.
But here the lizard seeks the sun,
Here coils in light the snake;
And here the fire-tuft hath begun
Its beauteous nest to make.
O then, while hums the earliest bee
Where verdure fires the plain,
Walk thou with me, and stoop to see
The glories of the lane!

For, oh, I love these banks of rock,
This roof of sky and tree,
These tufts, where sleeps the gloaming clock,
And wakes the earliest bee!
As spirits from eternal day
Look down on earth secure,
Gaze thou, and wonder, and survey
A world in miniature!
A world not scorn'd by Him who made
Even weakness by his might;
But solemn in his depth of shade,
And splendid in his light.
Light! not alone on clouds afar
O'er storm-lov'd mountains spread,
Or widely teaching sun and star,
Thy glorious thoughts are read;
Oh, no! thou art a wond'rous book,
To sky, and sea, and land—
A page on which the angels look,
Which insects understand!
And here, O Light! minutely fair,
Divinely plain and clear,
Like splinters of a crystal hair,
Thy bright small hand is here.
Yon drop-fed lake, six inches wide,
Is Huron, girt with wood;
This driplet feeds Missouri's tide—
And that Niagara's flood.
What tidings from the Andes brings
Yon line of liquid light,
That down from heav'n in madness flings
The blind foam of its might?
Do I not hear his thunder roll—
The roar that ne'er is still?

'Tis mute as death!—but in my soul
It roars, and ever will.
What forests tall of tiniest moss
Clothe every little stone!
What pigmy oaks their foliage toss
O'er pigmy valleys lone!
With shade o'er shade, from ledge to ledge,
Ambitious of the sky,
They feather o'er the steepest edge
Of mountains mushroom high.
O God of marvels! who can tell
What myriad living things
On these grey stones unseen may dwell;
What nations, with their kings?
I feel no shock, I hear no groan,
While fate perchance o'erwhelms
Empires on this subverted stone—
A hundred ruin'd realms!
Lo! in that dot, some mite, like me,
Impell'd by woe or whim,
May crawl, some atoms cliffs to see—
A tiny world to him!
Lo! while he pauses, and admires
The works of Nature's might,
Spurn'd by my foot, his world expires,
And all to him is night!
O God of terrors! what are we?—
Poor insects, spark'd with thought!
Thy whisper, Lord, a word from Thee,
Could smite us into nought!
But should'st Thou wreck our father-land,
And mix it with the deep,
Safe in the hollow of thine hand
Thy little ones would sleep.

II.—TO THE BRAMBLE FLOWER.

THY fruit full-well the school boy knows,
Wild bramble of the brake!
So, put thou forth thy small white rose;
I love it for his sake.
Though woodbines flaunt, and roses glow
O'er all the fragrant bowers,
Thou need'st not be ashamed to show
Thy satin-threaded flowers;
For dull the eye, the heart is dull,
That cannot feel how fair,
Amid all beauty beautiful,
Thy tender blossoms are!
How delicate thy gauzy frill!
How rich thy branchy stem!
How soft thy voice, when woods are still,
And thou sing'st hymns to them;
While silent showers are falling slow,
And 'mid the general hush,
A sweet air lifts the little bough,
Lone whispering through the bush!
The primrose to the grave is gone;
The hawthorn flower is dead;
The violet by the moss'd grey stone
Hath laid her weary head;
But thou, wild bramble! back dost bring,
In all their beauteous power,
The fresh green days of life's fair spring,
And boyhood's blossomy hour.
Scorn'd bramble of the brake! once more
Thou bid'st me be a boy,
To gad with thee the woodlands o'er
In freedom and in joy.

III.—TRANSPLANTED FLOWERS.

YE living gems of cold and fragrant fire!
Die ye for ever, when ye die, ye flowers?
Take ye, when in your beauty ye expire,
An everlasting farewell of your bowers?
No more to listen for the wooing air,
And song-brought morn, the cloud-ting'd woodlands o'er!
No more to June's soft lip your breasts to bare,
And drink fond evening's dewy breath no more!
Soon fades the sweetest, first the fairest dies,
For frail and fair are sisters; but the heart,
Fill'd with deep love, death's power to kill denies,
And sobs ev'n o'er the dead, "We *cannot* part!"
Have I not seen thee, Wild Rose, in my dreams,
Like a pure spirit—beauteous as the skies
When the clear blue is brightest, and the streams
Dance down the hills, reflecting the rich dyes
Of morning clouds, and cistus woodbine-twined?
Didst thou not wake me from a dream of death?
Yea, and thy voice was sweeter than the wind
When it inhales the love-sick violet's breath,
Bending it down with kisses, where the bee
Hums over golden gorse, and sunny broom.
Soul of the Rose! what said'st thou then to me?
"We meet," thou said'st, "though sever'd by the tomb:
Lo, brother, this is heav'n! And, thus the just shall bloom."

PLAINT.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

DARK, deep, and cold the current flows
Unto the sea where no wind blows,
Seeking the land which no one knows.

O'er its sad gloom still comes and goes
The mingled wail of friends and foes,
Borne to the land which no one knows.

Why shrieks for help yon wretch, who goes
With millions, from a world of woes,
Unto the land which no one knows?

Though myriads go with him who goes,
Alone he goes where no wind blows,
Unto the land which no one knows.

For all must go where no wind blows,
And none can go for him who goes;
None, none return whence no one knows.

Yet why should he who shrieking goes
With millions, from a world of woes,
Reunion seek with it or those?

Alone with God, where no wind blows,
And Death, his shadow—doom'd, he goes:
That God is there the shadow shows.

Oh, shoreless Deep, where no wind blows!
And, thou, oh Land which no one knows!
That God is All, His shadow shows.

James Sheridan Knowles.

1784—1862.

James Sheridan Knowles, one of the few successful followers of the poetic drama of the century, was born at Cork on the 12th of May, 1784. His father, James Knowles, was a schoolmaster, who married Jane Daunt, a widow,—daughter of Andrew Peace, one of the principal medical practitioners of Cork. Holding broad views on the subject of Catholic Emancipation, and taking an active part in promoting it, the elder Knowles offended his patrons and lost his scholars. In 1793 he took his little son to London, where he was afterwards joined by his wife. Under the wise and genial encouragement of his mother, James Sheridan began to display remarkable precocity. At twelve years of age he wrote plays for performance by himself and his youthful companions, a mimic stage serving as a theatre for pasteboard tragedies acted to dialogue spoken behind the scenes. At the age of fourteen he made the acquaintance of William Hazlitt, who was some six years his senior, and with whom he formed a lifelong friendship. Hazlitt brought him under the notice of Lamb and Coleridge, from whom he received encouragement and advice—Coleridge on one occasion giving him a lecture on poetry all to himself. While yet fourteen he secured the publication of "The Welsh Harper," a ballad which became

popular. Two years later his mother died, and on his father marrying a second time he left home, and his movements became uncertain. About the year 1804 he was serving as an ensign in the Wiltshire Militia in the Isle of Wight, from whence he was transferred to the Tower Hamlets division, in January 1805. In 1806 he left the Militia and studied medicine under Dr. Willan, and was appointed resident vaccinator to the Jennerian Society in Salisbury Square, London, securing the honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine from Aberdeen University. At this time he attended the ministry of Rowland Hill at Surrey Chapel; and it is at once an instance and an illustration of his sincerity and energy, that acting under the influence of Rowland Hill's preaching, when only twenty-one years of age, he actually succeeded in rescuing six young women from the London streets and restored them to their friends. He now became associated with a company of amateur players, for whom he acted as leading tragedian, and wrote "The Spanish Story," and "Hersilia." Soon after this he determined to adopt the stage as a profession, and with a view to travelling sought letters of introduction from his friends, one of whom, an old lady, replied in words that throw a strong sidelight upon his character: "He wants no letters of introduction; his face will introduce him into any house, and his heart will keep him there." His first appearance was at Bath, after which he proceeded to Dublin, where he played Hamlet at the Crow Street Theatre, but with small success. He next joined a company at Wexford, where he met two orphan girls, members of the company, Maria and Catherine Charteris, the elder

of whom he celebrated in a ballad, "The Modest Maid," and married October 25th, 1809. He next visited Waterford, where he met with Edmund Kean, then as unknown as himself, and for whom he wrote one of his earliest dramas, "Leo the Gypsy," which became a great local success. While here, too, he published a small volume of poems, which contained among other pieces, "The Smuggler," a poem he frequently recited with great success. Proceeding to Belfast, he joined another company, but subsequently left the stage and started school-keeping, first as English master to a ladies' school, and subsequently as head master of a school of his own. On the foundation of the Belfast Academical Institution, with rare filial devotion he declined for himself and secured for his father the head mastership, accepting for himself the mastership of grammar and elocution, taking over to the new Institution his own school of some hundred boys *en masse*. Whilst at Belfast he wrote "Brian Boroihme" (1814) and "Caius Gracchus" (1815) which were both produced at Belfast with marked success. The appointment of the elder Knowles to the Belfast Academical Institution was not a happy one. He proved both pedantic and cantankerous, the result of which was that James Sheridan retired from the school (1817), and his father was forcibly ejected. Sheridan Knowles next removed to Glasgow, where he taught elocution laboriously for some twelve years. Here he wrote "Virginius," a subject suggested to him in the Waterford days by Kean, who now, however, showed no disposition to undertake its representation. It was performed at Glasgow, where it had a run of fourteen or fifteen nights, and

attracted the attention of Macready, who produced it at Covent Garden, May 17th, 1820, where it became a triumphant success. "William Tell" followed five years later at Drury Lane, and the fame of the dramatist became established. A long series of works then succeeded: "The Beggar's Daughter of Bethnal Green," 1828; "Alfred the Great," produced at Drury Lane, 1831; "The Hunchback," at Covent Garden, 1832; "The Wife," at the same theatre, 1832; "The Daughter," at Drury Lane, 1836; "The Love Chase," at the Haymarket, 1837; "Woman's Wit," at Covent Garden, 1838; "The Maid of Mariendorpt," Haymarket, 1838; "Love," Covent Garden, 1839; "John of Procida," Covent Garden, 1840; "Old Maids," Covent Garden, 1841; "The Rose of Arragon," Haymarket, 1842; "The Secretary," Haymarket, 1843. The dramatist also published two novels—"Fortescue," 1847, and "George Lovell," 1849. Several editions of his dramatic works have been published—in three volumes 1843, in two volumes revised in 1856, and a later edition in 1883. In 1848, at the instance of Sir Robert Peel, he received a pension of £200 from the Civil List. Besides producing so much dramatic and literary work, Knowles continually acted in his own plays and lectured on elocution and other subjects. His fame was not confined to his own country, for he visited America with great success in 1834, and an edition of his plays was actually produced at Calcutta in 1838. In 1841 his wife died, and later he married Miss Elphinstone.

In his later life Knowles became subject to deep religious impressions, and exchanged the *rôle* of the lecturer for that of the preacher, becoming an earnest

and devoted member of the Baptist denomination, an occasional preacher, an acceptable speaker upon theological platforms, and an energetic contributor to religious literature. His old talent served him in his new sphere. His rendering of the more dramatic scenes of Bible story,—the conversion of Saul, the sacrifice of Elijah on Mount Carmel, the vision of Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones, were powerful deliveries, while his pulpit reading of Isaiah liii. left no eye unmoistened, no heart untouched. While directing his attention as an old man to more serious things, he did not reprobate his old vocation. He was a man of broad principles and wide sympathies, possessing a generosity of heart which was often a fault, and a force of energy which was always a surprise. He received many tokens of public favour during his latter years, and died at Torquay, November 30th, 1862. He was buried at the Necropolis, Glasgow.

Knowles' plays were a great success upon a stage which could not hold the dramatic works of much greater poets. Setting aside the dramas written for the library, a long list might be made of the plays written by greater poets—from Coleridge to Tennyson—and meant to be acted, which cannot be credited with a tithe of the success that those of Sheridan Knowles achieved. That his dramatic instinct was far greater than his poetic gift is clear, and that his success was due rather to his dramatic skill than to his poetic force is doubtless true; and yet, taking his work as it stands, it can hardly be disputed that he demonstrated the possibility of making the poetic drama acceptable to nineteenth-century audiences. His plays are eminently actable.

They were written by an actor, an actor be it said who was also a creative as well as a constructive artist, and who added skill in the delineation of character to a wide knowledge of human nature. His experience of the boards gave him a practical knowledge of stage-craft, which was of infinite value to him, while his career as an actor enabled him to form an accurate judgment of public taste and feeling. His dialogue, though sometimes marred by conceits and extravagances, is generally simple, direct and vigorous, and ever bright and rapid enough to excite and sustain interest. He had a wide range in his choice of subject, and a large command of dramatic situation; only one of his numerous plays—his first comedy, "The Beggar's Daughter"—being really a failure. "Virginius," his first great London success, is a powerful play, but does not lend itself well to quotation within possible limits. Indeed, the only adequate representation of an acting drama is a stage one. Two short selections from "William Tell," and one scene from the comedy of "The Hunchback," are all that space allows. His work, whether treating of classical or modern themes, always deals with men and women, and being instinct with human interest does not fail to interest the human. He worked simply with simple means, and depended for his success upon the natural excitement of natural emotions. His best work seems to embody qualities which are independent of time and place, and which should secure the same success whenever and wherever adequately reproduced.

ALFRED H. MILES.

WILLIAM TELL.

1835.

JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

I.

ALBERT AND GESLER.

ACT III., SCENE I.—*A mountain with mist.*

GESLER *is seen leaning against a rock, stupefied with terror and exhaustion—it grows darker and darker—the rain pours down in torrents, and a furious wind arises—the mountain streams begin to swell and roar.* ALBERT *is seen to be descending by the side of one of the streams, which in his course he crosses with the help of his pole.*

Alb. I'LL breathe upon this level, if the wind
Will let me. Ha! a rock to shelter me!
Thanks to't. A man, and fainting! Courage, friend,
Courage! A stranger that has lost his way—
Take heart!—take heart; you're safe. How feel you now? [*Gives him drink from a flask.*

Ges. Better.

Alb. You have lost your way upon the hill?

Ges. I have.

Alb. And whither would you go?

Ges. To Altorf.

Alb. I'll guide you thither.

Ges. You're a child.

Alb. I know
The way: the track I've come is harder far
To find.
Ges. The track you've come! What mean you? Sure
You have not been still farther in the mountains?
Alb. I've travelled from Mount Faigel.
Ges. No one with thee?
Alb. No one but God.
Ges. Do you not fear these storms?
Alb. God's in the storm!
Ges. And there are torrents, too,
That must be cross'd.
Alb. God's by the torrent, too!
Ges. You're but a child.
Alb. God will be with a child!
Ges. You're sure you know the way?
Alb. 'Tis but to keep
The side of yonder stream.
Ges. But guide me safe,
I'll give thee gold.
Alb. I'll guide thee safe without.
Ges. Here's earnest for thee. (*Offers gold.*) Here—
I'll double that,
Yea, treble it, but let me see the gate
Of Altorf. Why do you refuse the gold?
Tak't.
Alb. No.
Ges. You shall.
Alb. I will not.
Ges. Why?
Alb. Because
I do not covet it; and though I did,
It would be wrong to take it as the price
Of doing one a kindness.

Ges. Ha !—who taught
Thee that ?
Alb. My father.
Ges. Does he live in Altorf ?
Alb. No, in the mountains.
Ges. How !—a mountaineer ?
He should become a tenant of the city ;
He'd gain by't !
Alb. Not so much as he might lose by't.
Ges. What might he lose by't ?
Alb. Liberty.
Ges. Indeed !
He also taught thee that ?
Alb. He did.
Ges. His name ?
Alb. This is the way to Altorf, sir.
Ges. I'd know
Thy father's name.
Alb. The day is wasting—we
Have far to go.
Ges. Thy father's name, I say ?
Alb. I will not tell it thee.
Ges. Not tell it me !
Why ?
Alb. You may be an enemy of his.
Ges. May be, a friend.
Alb. May be ; but should you be
An enemy——Although I would not tell you
My father's name, I'd guide you safe to Altorf.
Will you follow me ?
Ges. Ne'er mind thy father's name :
What would it profit me to know't ? Thy hand
We are not enemies.
Alb. I never had

An enemy!
Ges. Lead on.
Alb. Advance your staff
As you descend; and fix it well. Come on!
Ges. What! must we take that steep?
Alb. 'Tis nothing! Come!
I'll go before—ne'er fear. Come on—come on!
[*They go out.*

SCENE III.—*The gates of* Altorf.

Enter GESLER *and* ALBERT.

Alb. You're at the gate of Altorf. [*Returning.*
Ges. Tarry, boy!
Alb. I would be gone—I am waited for.
Ges. Come back!
Who waits for thee? Come, tell me; I am rich
And powerful, and can reward.
Alb. 'Tis close
On evening!—I have far to go!—I'm late.
Ges. Stay! I can punish, too.
Alb. I might have left you,
When on the hill I found you fainting, with
The mist around you; but I stopp'd and cheer'd you,
Till to yourself you came again. I offer'd
To guide you, when you could not find the way,
And I have brought you to the gate of Altorf!
Ges. Boy, do you know me?
Alb. No.
Ges. Why fear you, then,
To trust with me your father's name?—Speak.
Alb. Why
Do you desire to know it?

Ges. You have served me,
And I would thank him, if I chanc'd to pass
His dwelling.

Alb. 'Twould not please him that a service,
So trifling, should be made so much of!

Ges. Trifling?
You've sav'd my life.

Alb. Then do not question me,
But let me go!

Ges. When I have learn'd from thee
Thy father's name. What hoa!

[*Knocks at the gate.*

Sentinel. (*Within.*) Who's there?

Ges. Gesler! [*The gate is opened.*

Alb. Ha, Gesler!

Ges. (*To the soldiers.*) Seize him! Wilt thou tell me
Thy father's name?

Alb. No!

Ges. I can bid them cast thee
Into a dungeon? Wilt thou tell it now?

Alb. No!

Ges. I can bid them strangle thee? Wilt tell it?

Alb. Never!

Ges. Away with him! Send Sarnem to me.

[Soldiers *take off* ALBERT *through the gate.*

Behind that boy, I see the shadow of
A hand, must wear my fetters, or 'twill try
To strip me of my power. I have felt to-day
What 'tis to live at others' mercy. I
Have tasted fear, to very sickness, and
Owed to a peasant-boy—my safety—Ay,
My life! and there does live the slave can say
Gesler's his debtor! How I loath'd the free
And fearless air with which he trod the hill!

Yea, though the safety of his steps was mine,
Oft as our pathway brink'd the precipice,
I wish'd to see him miss his footing and
Roll over! But he's in my power!—Some way
To find the parent nest of this fine eaglet,
And harrow it! I'd like to clip the broad
And full-grown wing that taught his tender pinion
So bold a flight!

Enter SARNEM.

Ges. Ha, Sarnem! Have the slaves,
Attended me, returned?

Sar. They have.

Ges. You'll see
That every one of them be laid in fetters.

Sar. I will.

Ges. Didst mark the boy?

Sar. That pass'd me?

Ges. Yes.

Sar. A mountaineer?

Ges. You'd say so, saw you him
Upon the hills; he walks them like their lord!
I tell thee, Sarnem, looking on that boy,
I felt I was not master of those hills.
He has a father!—neither promises
Nor threats could draw from him his name—a father
Who talks to him of liberty! I fear
That man.

Sar. He may be found.

Ges. He must; and, soon
As found, dispos'd of! I can see him now.
He is as palpable to my sight, as if
He stood like you before me. I can see him
Scaling that rock! yea, I can feel him, Sarnem,
As I were in his grasp, and he about

To hurl me o'er yon parapet! I live
In danger, till I find that man! Send parties
Into the mountains, to explore them far
And wide; and if they chance to light upon
A father, who expects his child, command them
To drag him straight before us. Sarnem, Sarnem,
They are not yet subdu'd. Some way to prove
Their spirit!—Take this cap; and have it set
Upon a pole in the market-place, and see
That one and all do bow to it. Whoe'er
Resists, or pays the homage sullenly,
Our bonds await him! Sarnem, see it done.

[SARNEM *goes out.*

We need not fear the spirit that would rebel
But dares not:—that which dares we will not fear.

[*Goes out.*

II.

ALBERT AND TELL.

ACT V., SCENE II.—*Without the* Castle.

Enter, slowly, Burghers *and* Women, LUTOLD, RODOLPH, GERARD, SARNEM, GESLER, TELL, ALBERT, *and a* Soldier *bearing* TELL'S *bow and quiver—another with a basket of apples.*

Ges. That is your ground. Now shall they measure, thence,
A hundred paces. Take the distance.

Tell. Is
The line a true one?

Ges. True or not, what is't
To thee?

Tell. What is't to me? A little thing,
A very little thing—a yard or two,

Is nothing here or there—were it a wolf
I shot at! Never mind!
Ges. Be thankful, slave,
Our grace accords thee life on any terms.
Tell. I will be thankful, Gesler! Villain, stop!
You measure to the sun.
Ges. And what of that?
What matter, whether to or from the sun?
Tell. I'd have it at my back!—The sun should shine
Upon the mark, and not on him that shoots.
I cannot see to shoot against the sun!—
I will not shoot against the sun!
Ges. Give him his way!—Thou hast cause to bless my mercy.
Tell. I shall remember it. I'd like to see
The apple I'm to shoot at.
Soldier (*with the basket of apples*). Here!
Ges. Show me
The basket!—There! [*Gives a very small apple.*
Tell. You've pick'd the smallest one.
Ges. I know I have.
Tell. O! do you?—But you see
The colour on't is dark—I'd have it light,
To see it better.
Ges. Take it as it is:
Thy skill will be the greater if thou hitt'st it.
Tell. True!—true!—I didn't think of that!—I wonder
I did not think of that.—Give me some chance
To save my boy! (*Throws away the apple with all his force.*) I will not murder him
If I can help it—for the honour of
The form thou wear'st, if all the heart be gone.
Ges. Well! choose thyself.
[*Hands a basket of apples*—TELL *takes one.*

Tell. Have I a friend among
The lookers on?
Ver. Here, Tell!
Tell. I thank thee, Verner!
He is a friend that does not mind a storm
To shake a hand with us. I must be brief.
When once the bow is drawn, we cannot take
The shot too soon. Verner, whatever be
The issue of this hour, the common cause
Must not stand still! Let not to-morrow's sun
Set on the tyrant's banner.—Verner! Verner!
The boy!—the boy!—Think'st thou he has the courage
To stand it?
Ver. Yes.
Tell. Does he tremble?
Ver. No.
Tell. Art sure?
Ver. I am.
Tell. How looks he?
Ver. Clear and smilingly.
If you doubt it—look yourself.
Tell. No—no—my friend,
To hear it is enough.
Ver. He bears himself
So much above his years—
Tell. I know!—I know.
Ver. With constancy so modest—
Tell. I was sure
He would—
Ver. And looks with such relying love
And reverence upon you.
Tell. Man! man! man!
No more! Already I'm too much the father
To act the man!—Verner, no more, my friend!

I would be flint—flint—flint. Don't make me feel
I'm not—You do not mind me!—Take the boy
And set him, Verner, with his back to me.—
Set him upon his knees—and place the apple
Upon his head, so that the stem may front me—
Thus, Verner! Charge him to keep steady—Tell him
I'll hit the apple!—Verner, do all this
More briefly than I tell it thee.

Ver. Come, Albert!

Alb. May I not speak with him before I go?

Ver. No—

Alb. I would only kiss his hand.

Ver. You must not.

Alb. I must!—I cannot go from him without!

Ver. It is his will you should.

Alb. His will, is it?
I am content, then—come.

Tell. My boy! [*Holding out his arms to him.*

Alb. My father! [*Running into* TELL'S *arms.*

Tell. If thou canst bear it, should not I?—Go now,
My son—and keep in mind that I can shoot.—
Go, boy—be thou but steady, I will hit
The apple. (*Kisses him.*) Go!—God bless thee! Go.—
My bow! [SARNEM *gives the bow.*
Thou wilt not fail thy master, wilt thou?—Thou
Hast never fail'd him yet, old servant.—No,
I'm sure of thee—I know thy honesty.
Thou'rt stanch!—Stanch!—I'd deserve to find thee treacherous,
Could I suspect thee so. Come, I will stake
My all upon thee! Let me see my quiver.

Ges. Give him a single arrow.

Tell. Do you shoot?

Lut. I do.

Tell. Is't so you pick an arrow, friend ?
The point, you see, is blunt, the feather jagg'd ;
That's all the use 'tis fit for. [*Breaks it.*
Ges. Let him have
Another. [TELL *examines another.*
Tell. Why, 'tis better than the first,
But yet not good enough for such an aim
As I'm to take. 'Tis heavy in the shaft :
I'll not shoot with it ! (*Throws it away.*) Let me see my quiver.
Bring it ! 'Tis not one arrow in a dozen
I'd take to shoot with at a dove, much less
A dove like that ! What is't you fear ? I'm but
A naked man ! A wretched naked man !
Your helpless thrall, alone in the midst of you,
With every one of you a weapon in
His hand. What can I do in such a strait
With all the arrows in that quiver ? Come,
Will you give it me or not ?
Ges. It matters not.
Show him the quiver. You're resolv'd, I see
Nothing shall please you.

[TELL *kneels and picks out an arrow, which he hides under his vest, and then selects another.*

Tell. Am I so ?—That's strange,
That's very strange !—Is the boy ready ?
Ver. Yes.
Tell. I'm ready too !—Keep silence, every one !
And stir not for my child's sake !—Let me have
Your prayers—your prayers—and be my witnesses,
That if his life's in peril from my hand,
'Tis only for the chance of saving it !

Now, friends, for mercy's sake, keep motionless
And silent.

[TELL *shoots, and a shout of wonder and exultation bursts from the crowd.* TELL *falls on his knees, and with difficulty supports himself.*

Ver. (*Rushing in with* ALBERT.) Thy boy is safe, no hair of him is touch'd.

Alb. Father, I'm safe—your Albert's safe. Dear father, Speak to me! speak to me!

Ver. He cannot, boy!

Alb. You grant him life?

Ges. I do.

Alb. And we are free?

Ges. You are.

Alb. Thank Heaven! thank Heaven!

Ver. Open his vest,
And give him air.

[ALBERT *opens his* Father's *vest, and an arrow drops.*—TELL *starts, fixes his eyes on* ALBERT, *and clasps him to his breast.*

Tell. My boy! my boy!

Ges. For what
Hid you that arrow in your breast? Speak, slave!

Tell. To kill thee, tyrant, had I slain my boy!

THE HUNCHBACK.

JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

Act V.

Scene I.—*A room in the* Earl of Rochdale's.

Enter Helen.

Helen. I'm weary wandering from room to room;
A castle after all is but a house—
The dullest one when lacking company.
Were I at home I could be company
Unto myself. I see not Master Walter.
He's ever with his ward. I see not her.
By Master Walter will she bide, alone.
My father stops in town. I can't see him.
My cousin makes his books his company.
I'll go to bed and sleep. No—I'll stay up
And plague my cousin into making love!
For, that he loves me, shrewdly I suspect.
How dull he is that hath not sense to see
What lies before him, and he'd like to find!
I'll change my treatment of him. Cross him, where
Before I used to humour him. He comes,
Poring upon a book.

Enter Modus, *with a small book.*

What's that you read?

Modus. Latin, sweet cousin.

Helen. 'Tis a naughty tongue,
I fear, and teaches men to lie.

Modus. To lie!

Helen. You study it. You call your cousin sweet,
And treat her as you would a crab. As sour
'Twould seem you think her, so you covet her!
Why how the monster stares, and looks about!
You construe Latin, and can't construe that.

Modus. I never studied women.

Helen. No; nor men.
Else would you better know their ways: nor read
In presence of a lady.

[*Strikes the book from his hand.*

Modus. Right you say,
And well you served me, cousin, so to strike
The volume from my hand. I own my fault;
So please you,—may I pick it up again?
I'll put it in my pocket!

Helen. Pick it up.
He fears me as I were his grandmother.
What is the book?

Modus. 'Tis Ovid's Art of Love.

Helen. That Ovid was a fool!

Modus. In what?

Helen. In that:
To call that thing an art, which art is none.

Modus. And is not love an art?

Helen. Are you a fool,
As well as Ovid? Love an art! No art
But taketh time and pains to learn. Love comes
With neither! Is't to hoard such grain as that,
You went to college? Better stay at home,
And study homely English.

Modus. Nay, you know not
The argument.

Helen. I don't? I know it better
Than ever Ovid did! The face,—the form,—
The heart,—the mind we fancy, cousin; that's
The argument! Why, cousin, you know nothing!
Suppose a lady were in love with thee,
Couldst thou by Ovid, cousin, find it out?
Couldst find it out, wert thou in love thyself?
Could Ovid, cousin, teach thee to make love?
I could, that never read him. You begin
With melancholy; then to sadness; then
To sickness; then to dying—but not die!
She would not let thee, were she of my mind!
She'd take compassion on thee. Then for hope;
From hope to confidence; from confidence
To boldness;—then you'd speak; at first entreat;
Then urge; then flout; then argue; then enforce;
Make prisoner of her hand; besiege her waist;
Threaten her lips with storming; keep thy word
And carry her! My sampler 'gainst thy Ovid!
Why, cousin, are you frighten'd, that you stand
As you were stricken dumb? The case is clear,
You are no soldier. You'll ne'er win a battle.
You care too much for blows!

Modus. You wrong me there.
At school I was the champion of my form;
And since I went to college—

Helen. That for college!

Modus. Nay, hear me!

Helen. Well? What, since you went to college?
You know what men are set down for, who boast
Of their own bravery. Go on, brave cousin:
What, since you went to college? Was there not
One Quentin Halworth there? You know there was,
And that he was your master!

Modus. He my master?
Thrice was he worsted by me!
Helen. Still was he
Your master.
Modus. He allow'd I had the best!
Allow'd it, mark me! not to me alone,
But twenty I could name.
Helen. And master'd you
At last! Confess it, cousin, 'tis the truth!
A proctor's daughter you did both affect—
Look at me and deny it!—Of the twain
She more affected you;—I've caught you now,
Bold cousin! Mark you? opportunity
On opportunity she gave you, sir,—
Deny it if you can!—but though to others,
When you discoursed of her, you were a flame;
To her you were a wick that would not light,
Though held in the very fire! And so he won her—
Won her, because he woo'd her like a man;
For all your cuffings, cuffing you again
With most usurious interest! Now, sir,
Protest that you are valiant!
Modus. Cousin Helen!
Helen. Well, sir?
Modus. The tale is all a forgery!
Helen. A forgery!
Modus. From first to last; ne'er spoke I
To a proctor's daughter while I was at college—
Helen. Well t'was a scrivener's then,—or somebody's.
But what concerns it whose? Enough, you loved her!
And, shame upon you, let another take her!
Modus. Cousin, I tell you, if you'll only hear me,
I loved no woman while I was at college—
Save one, and her I fancied ere I went there.

Helen. Indeed. (*Aside.*) Now I'll retreat, if he's advancing.
Comes he not on! O what a stock's the man!
(*Aloud.*) Well, cousin?
Modus. Well! What more would'st have me say?
I think, I've said enough.
Helen. And so think I.
I did but jest with you. You are not angry?
Shake hands! Why, cousin, do you squeeze me so?
Modus. (*Letting her go.*) I swear I squeezed you not!
Helen. You did not?
Modus. No.
I'll die if I did!
Helen. Why then you did not, cousin,
So let's shake hands again.—(*He takes her hand as before.*) O go, and now
Read Ovid! Cousin, will you tell me one thing:
Wore lovers ruffs in Master Ovid's time?
Behoved him teach them, then, to put them on;—
And that you have to learn. Hold up your head!
Why, cousin, how you blush! Plague on the ruff!
I cannot give't a set. You're blushing still!
Why do you blush, dear cousin? So!—'twill beat me!
I'll give it up.
Modus. Nay, prithee don't—try on!
Helen. And if I do, I fear you'll think me bold.
Modus. For what?
Helen. To trust my face so near to thine.
Modus. I know not what you mean.
Helen. I'm glad you don't!
Cousin, I own right well behaved you are,
Most marvellously well behaved! They've bred
You well at college. With another man
My lips would be in danger! Hang the ruff!

Modus. Nay, give it up, nor plague thyself, dear cousin.

Helen. Dear fool! [*Throws the ruff on the ground.*

I swear the ruff is good for just
As little as its master! There!—'Tis spoil'd—
You'll have to get another. Hie for it.
And wear it in the fashion of a wisp,
Ere I adjust it for thee! Farewell, cousin!
You'll need to study Ovid's Art of Love!

[HELEN *goes out.*

Modus. Went she in anger? I will follow her,—
No, I will not! Heigho! I love my cousin!
O would that she loved me! Why did she taunt me
With backwardness in love? What could she mean?
Sees she I love her, and so laughs at me
Because I lack the front to woo her? Nay,
I'll woo her then! Her lips shall be in danger,
When next she trusts them near me! Look'd she at me
To-day, as never did she look before!
A bold heart, Master Modus! 'Tis a saying,
A faint one never won fair lady yet!
I'll woo my cousin, come what will on't! Yes!

[*Begins reading again, and throws down the book.*

Hang Ovid's Art of Love! I'll woo my cousin!

[*He goes out.*

William Tennant.

1784—1848.

THERE are few poems of equal merit that are less known than "Anster Fair." The earliest and only success of its author, it obtained a ready and hearty recognition benorth the Tweed, but its general reputation has never been at all commensurate with its excellence.

Anster, better known to the stranger as Anstruther, alike the birthplace of the singer and the scene of his song, is an antiquated little town situated at the mouth of the Firth of Forth, on the shore of Fife. Here, on May 15th, 1784, William Tennant was born; and here, in the days of Scotland's merry monarch, James V., the scene of his song is laid.

The poet's father, Alexander Tennant, was a small farmer and merchant of Anstruther, and his mother, Ann Watson, a native of Cellardyke, a neighbouring village. Both parents were of more than average intelligence, and William inherited their mental store. Never physically robust, the poet lost the use of both his feet at an early age, and was obliged to have recourse to crutches for the rest of his life. He was educated at the burgh school at Anstruther, and afterwards at the University of St. Andrews, showing great aptitude in the acquisition of languages, dead and living. Means proving insufficient to enable him to complete his college

course, he went to Glasgow in 1803, and became clerk to his brother, who was then in business as a corn factor in that city. After two years' non-success in Glasgow, the brothers returned to Anstruther, in 1805, where they continued the business until 1811, when commercial difficulties arose from which the poet's brother escaped by flight, leaving the poet to bear the humiliation of arrest and imprisonment for debts which were not his own. It is said that some part of "Anster Fair" was written while in *durance vile*, and this seems probable, as part is known to have been written before his brother's failure, and the whole was published (anonymously, by William Cockburn, of Anstruther) in the following year, 1812.

"Anster Fair" is a poem of six cantos, and was the first work to acclimatise on the soil of British literature the "style of poetry" of Pulci, Berni, Ariosti, and others of the lighter Italian poets, a style afterwards adopted by Hookham Freere, "the ingenious Whistlecraft" for his "Monks and the Giants," and Lord Byron for his "Beppo" and "Don Juan." Published anonymously, and in a quarter so remote, it is not remarkable that the poem did not attract immediate or widespread attention. Lord Woodhouselee was the first to try and bring the author to light. In August 1812, writing to the publisher, he says: "The author of 'Anster Fair,' cannot long remain concealed. It contains, in my opinion, unequivocal marks of strong original genius; a vein of humour of an uncommon cast, united with a talent for natural description of the most vivid and characteristic species, and, above all, a true feeling of the sublime—forming altogether one of the most

pleasing and singular combinations of the different powers of poetry that I have ever met with."

In 1813 the poet became a schoolmaster at Dunino, a small parish midway between Anstruther and St. Andrews, and here he remained until 1816, when he was made parish dominie of Lasswade. In 1819 he became Professor of Classical and Oriental Languages to the Dollar Academy, a position which very much improved his circumstances and enabled him to build a modest villa, to which he gave the name of Devongrove. Here, in his own house, engaged in occupations which were thoroughly congenial, and placed by his appointment beyond anxiety as to means, the poet now addressed himself once more, and in a serious manner, to the cultivation of the Muse. "Anster Fair" had run through several editions, and had obtained for its author the friendship and admiration of a large and increasing circle, but ten years had elapsed since it appeared, and the poet had not spoken again. Under these circumstances "The Thane of Fife" appeared in 1822, but brought with it only disappointment for both the public and the author. He had tried the "mock heroic" with brilliant success, but the true heroic was not his. The second part of "The Thane of Fife" was never published. His later publications—none of which added to his fame—were "Papistry Stormed, or the Dingin' Down o' the Cathedral; "Cardinal Bethune," a drama in five acts; "John Baliol," an historical drama; and "Hebrew Dramas," founded on incidents of Bible history—his last work published in 1845. In 1831 he became a candidate for the vacant chair of Oriental Languages at St. Andrews, but was

defeated by Dr. Scott of Corstorphine. He was, however, appointed to the office on the death of Dr. Scott, three years later, by Jeffrey, then Lord Advocate. He died at Dollar in 1848, and was buried in his native town.

"Anster Fair," the work upon which his fame will rest, attracted the attention of Jeffrey on the appearance of the second edition in 1814; and to the much abused critic of the *Edinburgh* is due the credit of probably the only important notice it received. In the forty-seventh number of the *Edinburgh*, a remarkable number, for it contains Jeffrey's first reviews of no less than four works which stand high in the literature of the century: Scott's "Waverley" and "Lord of the Isles," Hogg's "Queen's Wake," and Tennant's "Anster Fair." After pointing out the legendary character of the basis of the work, and the Italian source of its style and form, he goes on to say—

"The great charm of this singular composition consists, no doubt, in the profusion of images and groups which it thrusts upon the fancy, and the crowd and hurry and animation with which they are all jostled and driven along; but this, though a very rare merit in any modern production, is entitled perhaps to less distinction than the perpetual sallies and outbreakings of a rich and poetical imagination, by which the homely themes on which the author is professedly employed are constantly ennobled or contrasted, and in which the ardour of a mind evidently fitted for higher tasks is somewhat capriciously expended. It is this frequent kindling of the diviner spirit—this tendency to rise above the trivial subjects among which he has chosen to

disport himself, and this power of connecting grand or beautiful conceptions with the representation of vulgar objects or ludicrous occurrences, that first recommended this poem to our notice, and still seems to us to entitle it to more general notoriety. The author is occupied, no doubt, in general, with low matters, and bent upon homely mirth, but his genius soars up every now and then in spite of him; and 'his delights'—to use a quaint expression of Shakespeare—

> 'his delights
> Are dolphin-like, and show their backs above
> The element they move in.'"

The basis of the poem is a competition for the hand of Maggie Lauder, which was promised to the supreme victor at the sports of "Anster Fair"—sports which included a donkey race, a sack race, a bagpipe competition, and a bardic contest. Nor was the lady's hand an empty one, for when "the king's stout trumpeter" "silence imposing on the rabble's roar," proclaimed the king's behest, he said—

> "For as a dow'r, along with Maggie's hand,
> The monarch shall the conqueror present
> With ten score acres of the royal land,
> All good of soil, and of the highest rent;
> Near where Dunfermline's palace-turrets stand,
> They stretch, arrayed in wheat, their green extent:
> With such a gift the King shall crown to-day
> The gen'rous toils of him who bears the prize away."

These, by the aid of his "good fairy," were won by "Rob the Ranter," who proved himself master of many fields.

It is impossible to read the description of the

dawn of the morning of the sports, without being struck by the vigour and beauty of the poet's imagination—impossible to peruse the description of the heroine without sympathising with the old song—

> "Wha wadna be in love
> Wi' bonnie Maggie Lauder?"

The poet is said to have regarded "Anster Fair" almost as a youthful indiscretion, and to have cherished a hope that he might produce something more worthy of his muse. How seldom an author rightly estimates the qualities of his own work! It is characterised by a vivacious freshness which nearly a hundred years have failed to destroy; a wealth of fancy that bubbles up with inexhaustible profusion, and sparkles with undimmed lustre still; an exuberance of animal spirits which is yet contagious; and an imagination prismatic in its outlook and kaleidoscopic in its rapidity of change. It is difficult to understand why it should be so little known, and still more difficult to think it can ever fail to interest while the eye loves colour and the heart loves fun.

ALFRED H. MILES.

ANSTER FAIR.

1812.

WILLIAM TENNANT.

I.

THE FAIR-DAY.

(FROM CANTO III., STANZAS I. TO VII).

I WISH I had a cottage snug and neat
  Upon the top of many-fountain'd Ide,
That I might thence in holy fervour greet
  The bright-gown'd Morning tripping up her side;
And when the low Sun's glory-buskin'd feet
  Walk on the blue wave of th' Ægean tide,
Oh I would kneel me down, and worship there
The God who garnish'd out a world so bright and fair!

The saffron-elbow'd Morning up the slope
  Of heav'n canaries in her jewell'd shoes,
And throws o'er Kelly-law's sheep-nibbled top
  Her golden apron dripping kindly dews;
And never, since she first began to hop
  Up heav'n's blue causeway, of her beams profuse,
Shone there a dawn so glorious and so gay,
As shines the merry dawn of ANSTER Market-day.

Round through the vast circumference of sky
  Scarce can the eye one speck of cloud behold,[1]
Save in the East some fleeces bright of dye,
  That stripe the hem of heav'n with woolly gold,
Whereon are happy angels wont to lie
  Lolling, in amaranthine flow'rs enroll'd,
That they may spy the precious light of God,
Flung from the blessed East o'er the fair Earth abroad.

The fair Earth laughs through all her boundless range,
  Heaving her green hills high to greet the beam;
City and village, steeple, cot, and grange,
  Gilt as with nature's purest leaf-gold seem;
The heaths and upland muirs, and fallows, change
  Their barren brown into a ruddy gleam,
And, on ten thousand dew-bent leaves and sprays,
Twinkle ten thousand suns, and fling their petty rays.

Up from their nests and fields of tender corn
  Full merrily the little sky-larks spring,
And on their dew-bedabbled pinions borne,
  Mount to the heaven's blue key-stone flickering;
They turn their plume-soft bosoms to the morn,
  And hail the genial light, and cheer'ly sing;
Echo the gladsome hills and valleys round,
As all the bells of Fife ring loud and swell the sound.

For when the first up-sloping ray was flung
  On ANSTER steeple's swallow-harb'ring top,
Its bell, and all the bells around were rung
  Sonorous, jangling loud without a stop;
For toilingly each bitter beadle swung,
  Ev'n till he smok'd with sweat, his greasy rope,
And almost broke his bell-wheel, ush'ring in
The morn of ANSTER FAIR, with tinkle-tankling din.

And, from our steeple's pinnacle outspread,
  The town's long colours flare and flap on high,
Whose anchor, blazon'd fair in green and red,
  Curls, pliant to each breeze that whistles by;
Whilst, on the boltsprit, stern, and topmast-head,
  Of brig and sloop that in the harbour lie,
Streams the red gaudery of flags in air,
All to salute and grace the morn of ANSTER FAIR.

II.

MAGGIE LAUDER.

(FROM CANTO III., STANZAS XII. TO XXII.)

Upon a little dappled nag, whose mane
Seem'd to have robb'd the steeds of Phaeton,
Whose bit, and pad, and fairly-fashion'd rein,
With silvery adornments richly shone,
Came Maggie Lauder forth, enwheel'd with train
Of knights and lairds around her trotting on:
At James' right hand she rode, a beauteous bride,
That well deserv'd to go by haughtiest Monarch's side.

Her form was as the Morning's blithesome star,
That, capp'd with lustrous coronet of beams,
Rides up the dawning orient in her car,
New-wash'd, and doubly fulgent from the streams;
The Chaldee shepherd eyes her light afar,
And on his knees adores her as she gleams:
So shone the stately form of Maggie Lauder,
And so th' admiring crowds pay homage, and applaud her.

Each little step her trampling palfrey took
Shak'd her majestic person into grace,
And, as at times, his glossy sides she strook
Endearingly with whip's green silken lace,
(The prancer seem'd to court such kind rebuke,
Loit'ring with wilful tardiness of pace);
By Jove, the very waving of her arm
Had pow'r a brutish lout t' unbrutify and charm!

Her face was as the summer cloud, whereon
  The dawning sun delights to rest his rays;
Compar'd with it, old Sharon's vale, o'ergrown
  With flaunting roses, had resign'd its praise;
For why? Her face with Heaven's own roses shone,
  Mocking the morn, and witching men to gaze;
And he that gaz'd with cold unsmitten soul,
That blockhead's heart was ice thrice bak'd beneath the Pole.

Her locks, apparent tufts of wiry gold,
  Lay on her lily temples, fairly dangling,
And on each hair, so harmless to behold,
  A lover's soul hung mercilessly strangling;
The piping silly zephyrs vied t' infold
  The tresses in their arms so slim and tangling,
And thrid in sport those lover-noosing snares,
Playing at hide-and-seek amid the golden hairs.

Her eye was as an honour'd palace, where
  A choir of lightsome Graces frisk and dance;
What object drew her gaze, how mean soe'er,
  Got dignity and honour from the glance;
Woe to the man on whom, she, unaware,
  Did the dear witch'ry of her eye elance!
'Twas such a thrilling, killing, keen regard—
May Heav'n from such a look preserve each tender bard!

Beneath its shading tucker heav'd a breast
  Fashion'd to take with ravishment mankind;
For never did the flimsy Coan vest
  Hide such a bosom in its gauze of wind;
Ev'n a pure angel, looking, had confest
  A sinless transport passing o'er his mind;
For, in the nicest turning-loom of Jove,
Shap'd were these charming hills, t' inspire a holy love.

So on she rode in virgin majesty,
Charming the thin dead air to kiss her lips,
And with the light and grandeur of her eye
Shaming the proud sun into dim eclipse;
While round her presence, clust'ring, far and nigh,
On horseback some, with silver spurs and whips,
And some afoot with shoes of dazzling buckles,
Attended, knights, and lairds, and clowns with horny knuckles.

Not with such crowd surrounded, nor so fair
In form, rode forth Semiramis of old,
On chariot where she sat in iv'ry chair
Beneath a sky of carbuncle and gold,
When to Euphrates' banks to take the air,
Or her new rising brick-walls to behold,
Abroad she drove, whilst round her wheels there pour'd
Satrap, and turban'd squire, and pursy Chaldee lord.

Soon to the Loan came MAG, and from her pad
Dismounting with a queen-like dignity
(So from his buoyant cloud, man's heart to glad,
Lights a bright angel on a hill-top high),
On a small mound, with turfy greenness clad,
She lit, and walk'd, enchantment on the eye;
Then on two chairs, that on its top stood ready,
Down sat the good King James, and ANSTER's bonny Lady.

Their chairs were finely carv'd, and overlaid
With the thin lustre of adorning gold,
And o'er their heads a canopy was spread
Of arras, flower'd with figures manifold,
Supported by four boys, of silver made,
Whose glitt'ring hands the vault of cloth uphold;
On each side sat or stood, to view the sport,
Stout lord, and lady fair, the flow'r of Scotland's court.

III.

THE BAGPIPE COMPETITION.

(FROM CANTO IV., STANZAS LXXI.—LXXXIII.)

Nodded his Liege assent, and straightway bade
Him stand a-top o' th' hillock at his side;
A-top he stood; and first a bow he made
To all the crowd that shouted far and wide;
Then, like a piper dext'rous at his trade,
His pipes to play adjusted and applied;
Each finger rested on its proper bore;
His arm appear'd half-raised to wake the bag's uproar.

A space he silent stood, and cast his eye
In meditation upwards to the pole,
As if he pray'd some fairy pow'r in sky
To guide his fingers right o'er bore and hole;
Then pressing down his arm, he gracefully
Awak'd the merry bagpipe's slumb'ring soul,
And pip'd and blew, and play'd so sweet a tune,
As might have well unspher'd the reeling midnight moon.

His ev'ry finger, to its place assign'd,
Mov'd quiv'ring like the leaf of aspen tree,
Now shutting up the skittish squeaking wind,
Now op'ning to the music passage free;
His cheeks, with windy puffs therein confin'd,
Were swoln into a red rotundity,
As from his lungs into the bag was blown
Supply of needful air to feed the growling drone.

And such a potent tune did never greet
The drum of human ear with lively strain ;
So merry, that from dancing on his feet
No man, undeaf, could stockishly refrain ;
So loud, 'twas heard a dozen miles complete,
Making old Echo pipe and hum again,
So sweet, that all the birds in air that fly,
Charm'd into new delight, come sailing through the sky.

Crow, sparrow, linnet, hawk, and white-wing'd dove,
Wheel in aërial jig o'er Anster Loan ;
The sea-mews from each Maian cleft and cove
O'er the deep sea come pinion-wafted on ;
The light-detesting bats now flap above,
Scaring the sun with wings to day unknown—
Round Robert's head they dance, they cry, they sing,
And shear the subtile sky with broad and playful wing.

And eke the mermaids that in ocean swim,
Drawn by that music from their shelly caves,
Peep now unbashful from the salt-sea brim,
And flounce and plash exulting in the waves ;
They spread at large the white and floating limb,
That Neptune amorously clips and laves,
And kem with combs of pearl and coral fair
Their long sleek oozy locks of green redundant hair.

Nor was its influence less on human ear :
First from their gilded chairs up-start at once
The royal JAMES and MAGGIE, seated near,
Enthusiastic both and mad to dance :
Her hand he snatch'd, and look'd a merry leer,
Then caper'd high in wild extravagance,
And on the grassy summit of the knoll,
Wagg'd each monarchial leg in galliard strange and droll.

As when a sunbeam, from the waving face
Of well-fill'd water-pail reflected bright,
Varies upon the chamber-walls its place,
And, quiv'ring, tries to cheat and foil the sight;
So quick did MAGGIE, with a nimble grace,
Skip patt'ring to and fro, alert and light,
And, with her noble colleague in the reel,
Haughtily heav'd her arms, and shook the glancing heel.

The Lords and Ladies next, who sat or stood
Near to the Piper and the King around,
Smitten with that contagious dancing mood,
'Gan hand in hand in high lavolt to bound,
And jigg'd it on as featly as they could,
Circling in sheeny rows the rising ground,
Each sworded Lord a Lady's soft palm griping,
And to his mettle rous'd at such unwonted piping.

Then did th' infectious hopping-mania seize
The circles of the crowd that stood more near,
Till, round and round, far spreading by degrees,
It madden'd all the Loan to kick and rear;
Men, women, children, lilt and ramp and squeeze,
Such fascination takes the gen'ral ear;
Ev'n babes that at their mothers' bosoms hung,
Their little willing limbs fantastically flung!

And hoar-hair'd men and wives, whose marrow Age
Hath from their hollow bones suck'd out and drunk
Canary in unconscionable rage,
Nor feel their sinews wither'd now and shrunk;
Pell-mell, in random couples they engage,
And boisterously wag feet, arms, and trunk,
As if they strove, in capering so brisk,
To heave their aged knees up to the solar disk.

And cripples from beneath their shoulders fling
  Their despicable crutches far away,
Then, yok'd with those of stouter limbs, upspring
  In hobbling merriment, uncouthly gay;
And some on one leg stand y-gamboling;
  For why? The other short and frail had they;
Some, whose both legs distorted were and weak,
Dance on their poor knee-pans in mad prepost'rous freak.

So on they trip, King, Maggie, Knight and Earl,
  Green-coated courtier, satin-snooded dame,
Old men and maidens, man, wife, boy, and girl,
  The stiff, the supple, bandy-legg'd, and lame,—
All suck'd and wrapt into the dance's whirl,
  Inevitably witch'd within the same;
Whilst Rob, far-seen, o'erlooks the huddling Loan,
Rejoices in his pipes, and squeals serenely on.

IV.

THE AWARD.

(FROM CANTO VI., STANZAS II., III, VI., AND VII.)

Scarce had the victor ceas'd his hindmost clause
  When from th' immensity of folk afar,
Rose such a hideous shout of loud applause,
  As ever stunn'd with outcry sun or star;
Each tongue grew riotous within its jaws,
  Clacking an acclamation popular;
Hands, high o'erhead uplifted, round and round,
Struck plausive palm on palm, and clapt a rattling sound.

And twice ten thousand hats, aloft upthrown
In black ascension, blot heaven's blue serene,
O'ercanopying Anster's crowded Loan
With crown and rim, as with a dusky screen;
And bonnets broad, and caps of sharp'ning cone,
Afloat 'twixt earth and firmament are seen,
And lasses' cowls, and hoods, uptost on high,
Encroach with tawdry clout upon the clouds of sky.

* * * * * *

Nor sits the monarch heedless of th' acclaim;
But, rising up majestic from his chair,
With kingly praise augments the victor's fame,
And clapping, grinds between his palms the air;
Then seizes he the fingers of the Dame,
And, gently raising from her seat the fair,
He, as the sign and seal of marriage-band,
Slips into Robert's grasp his Maggie's tender hand.

He bade his choir of trumpeters apply
To mouth their hollow instruments of sound,
And, in an unison of clangour high,
Publish the marriage to the world around:
The fellows blew it to the peak of sky,
And sky sent down again the loud rebound:
Earth did to heav'n's high top the news upthrow,
And heav'n re-bruited back th' alarum down below.

1 One speck of small cloud cannot eye behold.
—*Original form.*

Leigh Hunt.

1784—1859.

James Henry Leigh Hunt, better known as Leigh Hunt, was born at Southgate, near London, October the 19th, 1784. He was the younger son of Isaac Hunt (the representative of a Barbadoes family), who came as a refugee from America, where he had taken the British side in the conflict in Pennsylvania during the war. Mr. Hunt became a clergyman in the Church of England, and was for a time tutor to Mr. Leigh, nephew of Lord Chandos. His younger son, named after his pupil, was sent to Christ's Hospital at the time that Charles Lamb was also being educated there; but for a similar reason as that which deterred his school-fellow from entering the Church—an impediment in his speech—young Leigh Hunt could not become a "Grecian," and left the school at fifteen. He had already written verses of some merit, which, with a few later productions, his father collected and published in a volume. After having spent some time in the office of his brother Stephen, who was an attorney, Leigh Hunt obtained an appointment in the War Office, and became a contributor of literary and dramatic criticisms to the *Times* and other London publications. In 1808 he relinquished his post at the War Office to become editor of the *Examiner*, which had been started by his brother John, with whom he had lived

while writing for another paper called the *News*, which they had brought out in 1805.

The *Examiner* was conducted with marked ability, and its literary excellence soon gave to its political articles considerable importance among what was then the advanced Liberal party. A satirical attack on the Prince Regent led to a prosecution which ended in the brothers Hunt being sentenced to serve "two years' imprisonment in separate gaols, and to pay a fine of £500 apiece," Leigh being incarcerated in the Surrey (Horsemonger Lane) Gaol, and his brother in that of Coldbath Fields. His captivity was mitigated by the great popularity which he attained, and the sympathy of friends who visited him, among whom were Byron, Shelley, Keats, Lamb, Moore, and Brougham. Nor were other circumstances wanting to make his imprisonment endurable. His bright, cheerful, and winning manners secured him some liberty, and he was allowed to arrange and adorn two rooms in the infirmary to his heart's desire. In his autobiography, published in 1850, he says, "I papered the walls with a trellis of roses, I had the ceiling coloured with clouds and sky; the barred windows I screened with Venetian blinds, and when my bookcases were set up with their busts, and flowers and a pianoforte made their appearance, perhaps there was not a handsomer room on that side the water. I took a pleasure, when a stranger knocked at the door, to see him come in and stare about him. The surprise on issuing from the Borough, and passing through the avenues of a gaol, was dramatic." He heartily enjoyed the surprise of his friends when they were suddenly admitted to this apartment, of

which "Charles Lamb declared there was no other such room except in a fairy tale." But he had another surprise for them. The little yard outside was shut in with green palings and converted into a garden, with scarlet runners growing on a trellis work, and a grass-plat and border formed of a thick bed of earth from a nursery, and filled with young trees and flowers, among which were some heartsease, which elicited the admiration of Tom Moore. There was even an apple-tree, from which, the poet says with a certain humorous pride, "we managed to get a pudding the second year." In his prison garden he read and worked in fine weather—sometimes under an awning—and he worked to some purpose, for before his term expired he had written a masque called "The Descent of Liberty," and the greater portion of his charming "Story of Rimini," commenced some time before, and finished in 1816, after his release. His imprisonment lasted from February the 3rd, 1813, to February the 3rd, 1815, his liberation being celebrated in the well-known sonnet of Keats—

"What though, for showing truth to flatter'd state,
Kind Hunt was shut in prison, yet has he,
In his immortal spirit, been as free
As the sky-searching lark, and as elate.
Minion of grandeur! think you he did wait?
Think you he nought but prison walls did see,
Till, so unwilling, thou unturn'dst the key?
Ah, no! far happier, nobler was his fate!
In Spenser's halls he stray'd, and bowers fair,
Culling enchanted flowers; and he flew
With daring Milton through the fields of air:
To regions of his own his genius true
Took happy flights. Who shall his fame impair
When thou art dead and all thy wretched crew?"

This episode of the bower in Horsemonger Lane Gaol is significant of the natural disposition of Leigh Hunt, and of the characteristics of his poetry. He looked out upon the world with invincible cheerfulness. He loved the light and sunny aspects of Nature; to be amidst birds and flowers, and the surroundings that make life pleasant and adorn its more serious aspects with suggestions of beneficence. Probably he seldom regarded natural objects as Wordsworth did; he can scarcely be said to have lived in the contemplation of their relation to the solemn problems of existence, but they had for him associations with the gentle virtues of home life, the amenities and innocent gaieties of society; they were almost necessary adjuncts to his airy, genial temperament. It cannot be said, however, that his poems are wanting in seriousness or in vigour. They are distinguished by remarkable lucidity, by easy grace, and by that directness which exacts little from the reader, who is often too apt to undervalue their power because they exhibit a touch so light and facile.

On leaving prison Mr. Hunt wrote "Foliage," consisting of poems original and translated from classic authors; and in 1818 started the *Indicator*, a popular literary magazine, in which he had the assistance of Charles Lamb and others. His pecuniary difficulties, however, were pressing, and he accepted the invitation of Shelley to go to Italy, which he reached only just before Shelley's death. For some time he remained there with Byron, in conjunction with whom he started *The Liberal*, a journal which was unsuccessful, and over which, as in some other matters, he and the author of "Childe

Harold" disagreed. While he was at Genoa he produced a translation of Redi's "Bacco in Tuscana," and a serious work entitled "Religion of the Heart," and on his return to London, "Captain Sword and Captain Pen."

Leigh Hunt's translations are happy and characteristic, and though really beyond the scope of this work are represented here (pp. 323-5) by his rendering of "Petrarch's Contemplations of Death in the Bower of Laura." It will be of interest to state that the Jenny of the "Rondeau," p. 330, was Jane Welsh Carlyle, the wife of the author of "Sartor Resartus," and that the incident recorded occurred after hearing Leigh Hunt read his sonnet, "On a Lock of Milton's Hair," p. 330.

Though working constantly, both in journalism and the lighter paths of literature and poetry, Hunt was seldom free from debt, and his difficulties had followed him from the time of his imprisonment. Happily he had many friends, and indeed his happy temperament, his eminent fairness as a critic, his acquirements as a scholar, and his sympathetic qualities as a poet, endeared him, not only to those who knew him, but to a public which seemed to be on delightfully familiar terms with the author whom they had never seen. In 1842 he received an annuity of £120 from Mrs. Shelley, and in 1847 Charles Dickens and some of his friends in literature and art organised a series of dramatic performances in the provinces, part of the proceeds of which went to relieve Hunt from his pressing liabilities; while a grant of a pension of £200 a year, procured for him by Lord John Russell, enabled him to devote himself in greater comfort and less disturbed leisure to the

production of some of his best and most characteristic work. In 1850 he published his autobiography, already quoted, a new edition of which, revised by himself, and containing an introduction by his son, was published in the year following his death (1860). It is a fascinatingly interesting work, containing vivid pictures of the literary society of his time, characteristic vignettes of his most illustrious contemporaries, besides revealing, by what it omits rather than by what it says, the singularly fine temper, delicate sense of humour, generous bearing, and ultra-conscientiousness of its author. He died on the 28th of August, 1859, and was buried at Kensal Green Cemetery.

Charming as his "Story of Rimini" is, long as it will maintain for him a place among the poets of his time, notable as its influence has been on the use of the heroic couplet, it is as a critic that Hunt takes his highest place in the literature of the century. In truth, he was well equipped for the critic's office. He had a keen eye, an open mind, an even judgment, a warm but intrepid heart, and a light incisive utterance. There were few of his illustrious contemporaries who were not indebted to him for vindication or exposition. He was one of the earliest champions of "The Lake Poets," and did much to awaken interest in the true charm of their work; later, he gave similar service for Keats and Shelley, and in each case did honour alike to literature and to his own generous and penetrating judgment.

THOMAS ARCHER.

THE STORY OF RIMINI.

1816.

LEIGH HUNT.

Giovanni Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, a renowned warrior, but one

> "Warp'd in the shoulder, broken at the hip,
> Though strong withal, nor spoilt for soldiership;
> A heap of vigour planted on two stands
> Of shapeless bone, and hung with giant hands,"

has won by his victories the hand of the Princess Francesca, daughter of the reigning Count of Ravenna, who, fearing her unwillingness to marry so uncouth a bridegroom, persuades the latter to wed her by proxy. The Prince, without divining the Count's reason, sends his brother Paulo, a noble and handsome man, who is also unaware of the deception, to Ravenna for this purpose, the Count meanwhile concealing the intrigue from his daughter. Francesca, supposing Paulo to be her affianced husband, loves him at first sight. The Count then tells her that affairs of state have detained the real bridegroom, and persuades her to consummate the nuptials and return with Paulo to Rimini.

(FROM CANTOS III. AND IV.)

WHAT sort of life the bride and bridegroom led
From that first jar the history hath not said:
No happy one, to guess from looks constrain'd,
Attentions over-wrought, and pleasures feign'd.
The Prince, 'twas clear, was anxious to imply
That all was love and grave felicity;
The least suspicion of his pride's eclipse
Blacken'd his lowering brow, and blanch'd his lips,
And dreadful look'd he underneath his wrath;—
Francesca kept one tranquil-seeming path,
Mild with her lord, generous to high and low,—
But in her heart was anger too, and woe.

Paulo meantime, the Prince that fetch'd the bride,
(Oh, shame that lur'd him from a brother's side!)
Had learnt, I know not how, the secret snare,
That gave her up to his admiring care.
Some babbler, may-be, of old Guido's court,
Or foolish friend had told him, half in sport;
But to his heart the fatal flattery went,
And grave he grew, and inwardly intent,
And ran back in his mind, with sudden spring,
Look, gesture, smile, speech, silence, everything,
E'en what before had seem'd indifference,
And read them over in another sense.
Then would he blush with sudden self-disdain,
To think how fanciful he was, and vain;
And with half angry, half regretful sigh,
Tossing his chin, and feigning a free eye,
Breathe off, as 'twere, the idle tale, and look
About him for his falcon or his book;
Scorning that ever he should entertain
One thought that in the end might give his brother pain.
Not that he lov'd him much, or could; but still
Brother was brother, and ill visions ill.

This start, however, came so often round,—
So often fell he in deep thought, and found
Occasion to renew his carelessness,
Yet every time the little power grown less,
That by degrees, half wearied, half inclin'd,
To the sweet struggling image he resign'd;
And merely, as he thought, to make the best
Of what by force would come about his breast,
Began to bend down his admiring eyes
On all her soul-rich looks and qualities,
Turning their shapely sweetness every way,

Till 'twas his food and habit day by day,
And she became companion of his thought;—
Oh wretched sire! thy snare has yet but half been wrought.

Love by the object lov'd is soon discern'd,
And grateful pity is love half return'd.
Of pity for herself the rest was made,
Of first impressions and belief betray'd;
Of all which the unhappy sire had plann'd
To fix his dove within the falcon's hand.
Bright grew the morn whenever Paulo came;
The only word to write was either's name;
Soft in each other's presence fell their speech;
Each, though they look'd not, felt they saw but each;
'Twas day, 'twas night, as either came or went,
And bliss was in two hearts, with misery strangely blent.

Oh, now ye gentle hearts, now think awhile,
Now while ye still can think and still can smile;
Thou, Paulo, most;—whom, though the most to blame,
The world will visit with but half the shame.
Bethink thee of the future days of one
Who holds her heart the rightest heart undone.
Thou holdest not thine such. Be kind and wise;—
Where creeps the once frank wisdom of thine eyes?
To meet e'en thus may cost her many a tear:
"Meet not at all!" cries Fate, to all who love and fear.

A fop there was, rich, noble, well receiv'd,
Who, pleas'd to think the Princess inly griev'd,
Had dar'd to hope, beside the lion's bower,
Presumptuous fool! to play the paramour.
Watching his time one day, when the grim lord
Had left her presence with an angry word,

And giving her a kind, adoring glance,
The coxcomb feign'd to press her hand by chance;
The Princess gaz'd a moment with calm eyes,
Then bade him call the page that fann'd away the flies.

For days, for weeks, the daring coward shook
At dreams of daggers in the Prince's look,
Till finding nothing said, the shame and fright
Turn'd his conceited misery to spite.
The lady's silence might itself be fear;
What if there lurk'd some wondrous rival near?
He watch'd.—He watch'd all movements, looks, words, sighs,
And soon found cause to bless his shabby eyes.

It chanc'd alas! that for some tax abhorr'd,
A conquer'd district fell from its new lord;
Black as a storm the Prince the frontier cross'd
In fury to regain his province lost,
Leaving his brother, who had been from home
On state affairs, to govern in his room.
Right zealous was the brother; nor had aught
Yet giv'n Giovanni one mistrusting thought.
He deem'd his consort cold as wintriest night,
Paulo a kind of very fop of right;
For though he cloak'd his own unshapeliness,
And thought to glorify his power, with dress,
He held all virtues, not in his rough ken,
But pickthank pedantries in handsome men.

The Prince had will'd, however, that his wife
Should lead, till his return, a closer life,
She therefore disappear'd; not pleas'd, not proud
To have her judgment still no voice allow'd;
Not without many a gentle hope repress'd,
And tears; yet conscious that retreat was best.
Besides, she lov'd the place to which she went—

A bower, a nest, in which her grief had spent
Its calmest time: and as it was her last
As well as sweetest, and the fate comes fast
That is to fill it with a dreadful cry,
And make its walls ghastly to passers by,
I'll hold the gentle reader for a space
Ling'ring with piteous wonder in the place.

A noble range it was, of many a rood,
Wall'd and tree-girt, and ending in a wood.
A small sweet house o'erlook'd it from a nest
Of pines:—all wood and garden was the rest,
Lawn, and green lane, and covert:—and it had
A winding stream about it, clear and glad,
With here and there a swan, the creature born
To be the only graceful shape of scorn.
The flower-beds all were liberal of delight;
Roses in heaps were there, both red and white,
Lilies angelical, and gorgeous glooms
Of wall-flowers, and blue hyacinths, and blooms
Hanging thick clusters from light boughs; in short,
All the sweet cups to which the bees resort,
With plots of grass, and leafier walks between
Of red geraniums, and of jessamine,
And orange, whose warm leaves so finely suit,
And look as if they shade a golden fruit;
And midst the flow'rs, turf'd round beneath a shade
Of darksome pines, a babbling fountain play'd,
And 'twixt their shafts you saw the water bright,
Which through the tops glimmer'd with show'ring light.
So now you stood to think what odours best
Made the air happy in that lovely nest;
And now you went beside the flowers, with eyes
Earnest as bees, restless as butterflies;

And then turn'd off into a shadier walk
Close and continuous, fit for lovers' talk;
And then pursued the stream, and as you trod
Onward and onward o'er the velvet sod,
Felt on your face an air, watery and sweet,
And a new sense in your soft-lighting feet.
At last you enter'd shades indeed, the wood,
Broken with glens and pits, and glades far-view'd,
Through which the distant palace now and then
Look'd lordly forth with many-window'd ken;
A land of trees,—which reaching round about
In shady blessing stretch'd their old arms out;
With spots of sunny openings, and with nooks
To lie and read in, sloping into brooks,
Where at her drink you startled the slim deer,
Retreating lightly with a lovely fear.
And all about, the birds kept leafy house,
And sung and darted in and out the boughs;
And all about, a lovely sky of blue
Clearly was felt, or down the leaves laugh'd through;
And here and there, in ev'ry part, were seats,
Some in the open walks, some in retreats,—
With bow'ring leaves o'erhead, to which the eye
Look'd up half sweetly and half awfully,—
Places of nestling green, for poets made,
Where, when the sunshine stuck a yellow shade,
The rugged trunks, to inward peeping sight,
Throng'd in dark pillars up the gold green light.

But 'twixt the wood and flowery walks, half-way,
And form'd of both, the loveliest portion lay,—
A spot, that struck you like enchanted ground:—
It was a shallow dell, set in a mound
Of sloping orchards,—fig, and almond trees,

Cherry and pine, with some few cypresses;
Down by whose roots, descending darkly still,
(You saw it not, but heard) there gush'd a rill,
Whose low sweet talking seem'd as if it said
Something eternal to that happy shade.
The ground within was lawn, with fruits and flowers
Heap'd towards the centre, half of citron bowers;
And in the middle of those golden trees,
Half seen amidst the globy oranges,
Lurk'd a rare summer-house, a lovely sight,—
Small, marble, well-proportion'd, creamy white,
Its top with vine-leaves sprinkled,—but no more,—
And a young bay-tree either side the door.
The door was to the wood, forward and square,
The rest was domed at top, and circular;
And through the dome the only light came in,
Ting'd as it enter'd by the vine-leaves thin.

It was a beauteous piece of ancient skill,
Spar'd from the rage of war, and perfect still;
By some suppos'd the work of fairy hands,—
Fam'd for luxurious taste, and choice of lands,
Alcina or Morgana,—who from fights
And errant fame inveigled amorous knights,
And liv'd with them in a long round of blisses,
Feasts, concerts, baths, and bower-enshaded kisses.
But 'twas a temple, as its sculpture told,
Built to the Nymphs that haunted there of old;
For o'er the door was carv'd a sacrifice
By girls and shepherds brought, with reverent eyes,
Of sylvan drinks and foods, simple and sweet,
And goats with struggling horns and planted feet:
And round about, ran, on a line with this,
In like relief, a world of pagan bliss,

That show'd, in various scenes, the nymphs themselves
Some by the water-side, on bowery shelves
Leaning at will,—some in the stream at play,—
Some pelting the young Fauns with buds of May,—
Or half-asleep pretending not to see
The latter in the brakes come creepingly,
While from their careless urns, lying aside
In the long grass, the straggling waters glide.
Never, be sure, before or since was seen
A summer-house so fine in such a nest of green.

Ah, happy place! balm of regrets and fears,
E'en when thy very loveliness drew tears!
The time is coming, when to hear thee nam'd
Will be to make Love, Guilt, Revenge's self asham'd.

All the sweet range, wood, flower-bed, grassy plot,
Francesca lov'd, but most of all this spot.
Whenever she walk'd forth, wherever went
About the grounds, to this at last she bent:
Here she had brought a lute and a few books;
Here would she lie for hours, often with looks
More sorrowful by far, yet sweeter too;
Sometimes with firmer comfort, which she drew
From sense of injury's self, and truth sustain'd:
Sometimes with rarest resignation, gain'd
From meek self-pitying mixtures of extremes
Of hope and soft despair, and child-like dreams,
And all that promising calm smile we see
In Nature's face, when we look patiently.
Then would she think of heaven; and you might hear
Sometimes, when everything was hush'd and clear,
Her sweet, rich voice from out those shades emerging,
Singing the evening anthem to the Virgin.

The gardeners, and the rest, who served the place,
And bless'd whenever they beheld her face,
Knelt when they heard it, bowing and uncover'd,
And felt as if in air some sainted beauty hover'd.

Oh weak old man! Love, saintliest life, and she,
Might all have dwelt together, but for thee.

One day,—'twas on a gentle, autumn noon,
When the cicale cease to mar the tune
Of birds and brooks—and morning work is done,
And shades have heavy outlines in the sun,—
The Princess came to her accustomed bower
To get her, if she could, a soothing hour;
Trying, as she was used, to leave her cares
Without, and slumberously enjoy the airs,
And the low-talking leaves, and that cool light
The vines let in, and all that hushing sight
Of closing wood seen through the opening door,
And distant plash of waters tumbling o'er,
And smell of citron blooms, and fifty luxuries more.

She tried as usual for the trial's sake,
For even that diminish'd her heart-ache;
And never yet, how ill soe'er at ease,
Came she for nothing 'midst the flowers and trees.
Yet how it was she knew not, but that day
She seem'd to feel too lightly borne away,—
Too much reliev'd,—too much inclin'd to draw
A careless joy from every thing she saw,
And looking round her with a new-born eye,
As if some tree of knowledge had been nigh,
To taste of nature primitive and free,
And bask at ease in her heart's liberty.

Painfully clear those rising thoughts appear'd,
With something dark at bottom that she fear'd,
And turning from the trees her thoughtful look,
She reach'd o'er head, and took her down a book,
And fell to reading with as fix'd an air,
As though she had been wrapt since morning there.

'Twas "Launcelot of the Lake," a bright romance,
That like a trumpet made young pulses dance,
Yet had a softer note that shook still more:—
She had begun it but the day before,
And read with a full heart, half sweet, half sad,
How old King Ban was spoil'd of all he had
But one fair castle: how one summer's day
With his fair queen and child he went away
In hopes King Arthur might resent his wrong;
How reaching by himself a hill ere long,
He turn'd to give his castle a last look,
And saw its calm white face; and how a smoke,
As he was looking, burst in volumes forth,
And good King Ban saw all that he was worth,
And his fair castle burning to the ground,
So that his wearied pulse felt overwound,
And he lay down, and said a prayer apart
For those he lov'd, and broke his poor old heart.
Then read she of the queen with her young child,
How she came up, and nearly had gone wild,
And how in journeying on in her despair,
She reach'd a lake, and met a lady there,
Who pitied her, and took the baby sweet
Into her arms, when lo! with closing feet
She sprang up all at once, like bird from brake,
And vanish'd with him underneath the lake.
Like stone thereat the mother stood, alas!—

The fairy of the place the lady was,
And Launcelot (so the boy was call'd) became
Her pupil, till in search of knightly fame
He went to Arthur's court, and play'd his part
So rarely, and display'd so frank a heart,
That what with all his charms of look and limb,
The Queen Geneura fell in love with him :—
And here, such interest in the tale she took,
Francesca's eyes went deeper in the book.

Ready she sat with one hand to turn o'er
The leaf, to which her thoughts ran on before,
The other on the table, half enwreath'd
In the thick tresses over which she breath'd.
So sat she fix'd, and so observ'd was she
Of one, who at the door stood tenderly,—
Paulo,—who from a window seeing her
Go straight across the lawn, and guessing where,
Had thought she was in tears, and found, that day,
His usual efforts vain to keep away.
Twice had he seen her since the Prince was gone,
On some small matter needing unison ;
Twice linger'd, and convers'd, and grown long friends ;
But not till now where no one else attends.—
"May I come in ?" said he :—it made her start,—
That smiling voice ;—she colour'd, press'd her heart
A moment, as for breath, and then with free
And usual tone said,—"O yes,——certainly."
There's wont to be, at conscious times like these,
An affectation of a bright-eyed ease,
An air of something quite serene and sure,
As if to seem so, were to be, secure.
With this the lovers met, with this they spoke,
With this sat down to read the self-same book.

And Paulo, by degrees, gently embrac'd
With one permitted arm her lovely waist;
And both their cheeks, like peaches on a tree,
Came with a touch together thrillingly,
And o'er the book they hung, and nothing said,
And every lingering page grew longer as they read.

As thus they sat, and felt with leaps of heart
Their colour change, they came upon the part
Where fond Geneura, with her flame long nurst,
Smil'd upon Launcelot, when he kiss'd her first:—
That touch, at last, through every fibre slid;
And Paulo turn'd, scarce knowing what he did,
Only he felt he could no more dissemble,
And kiss'd her, mouth to mouth, all in a tremble.—
Oh then she wept,—the poor Francesca wept;
And pardon oft he pray'd; and then she swept
The tears away, and look'd him in the face,
And, well as words might save the truth disgrace,
She told him all, up to that very hour,
The father's guile, th' undwelt-in bridal bower,—
And wish'd for wings on which they two might soar
Far, far away, as doves to their own shore,
With claim from none.—That day they read no more.

(CANTO IV.)

But other thoughts, on other wings than theirs,
Came bringing them, ere long, their own despairs.
The spiteful fop I spoke of, he that set
His eyes at work to pay his anger's debt,—
This idiot, prying from a neighb'ring tower,
Had watch'd the lover to the lady's bower,
And flew to make a madman of her lord,
Just then encamp'd with loss, a shame his soul abhorr'd.

Pale first, then red, his eyes upon the stretch,
Then deadly white, the husband heard the wretch,
Who in soft terms, almost with lurking smile,
Ran on, expressing his "regret" the while.
The husband, prince, cripple, and brother heard;
Then seem'd astonish'd at the man; then stirr'd
His tongue but could not speak; then dash'd aside
His chair as he arose, and loudly cried,
"Liar and madman! thou art he was seen
Risking the fangs which thou hast rush'd between.
Regorge the filth in thy detested throat."—
And at the word, with his huge fist he smote
Like iron on the place, then seiz'd him all,
And dash'd in swoon against the bleeding wall.

'Twas dusk:—he summon'd an old chieftain stern,
Giving him charge of all till his return,
And with one servant got to horse and rode
All night, until he reach'd a lone abode
Not far from the green bower. Next day at noon,
Through a bye-way, free to himself alone,
Alone he rode, yet ever in disguise,
His hat pull'd over his assassin eyes,
And coming through the wood, there left his horse,
Then down amid the fruit-trees, half by force,
Made way; and by the summer-house's door,
Which he found shut, paus'd till a doubt was o'er.
Paus'd, and gave ear. There was a low sweet voice:—
The door was one that open'd without noise;
And opening it, he look'd within, and saw,
Nought hearing, nought suspecting, not in awe
Of one created thing in earth or skies,
The lovers, interchanging words and sighs,
Lost in the heaven of one another's eyes.

"To thee it was my father wedded me,"
Francesca said:—"I never lov'd but thee."
"The rest was ever but an ugly dream."
"Damn'd be the soul that says it," cried a scream.
Horror is in the room,—shrieks,—roaring cries,
Parryings of feeble palms,—blindly shut eyes:—
What, without arms, avail'd grief, strength, despair?
Or what the two poor hands put forth in prayer?
Hot is the dagger from the brother's heart,
Deep in the wife's:—dead both and dash'd apart,
Mighty the murderer felt as there they lay;
Mighty, for one huge moment, o'er his prey;
Then, like a drunken man, he rode away.

TO T. L. H.

SIX YEARS OLD, DURING A SICKNESS

1817.

LEIGH HUNT.

SLEEP breathes at last from out thee,
My little, patient boy;
And balmy rest about thee
Smoothes off the day's annoy.
I sit me down, and think
Of all thy winning ways;
Yet almost wish, with sudden shrink,
That I had less to praise.

Thy sidelong pillowed meekness,
Thy thanks to all that aid,
Thy heart, in pain and weakness,
Of fancied faults afraid;
The little trembling hand
That wipes thy quiet tears,
These, these are things that may demand
Dread memories for years.

Sorrows I've had, severe ones,
I will not think of now;
And calmly 'midst my dear ones
Have wasted with dry brow;
But when thy fingers press
And pat my stooping head,
I cannot bear the gentleness,—
The tears are in their bed.

Ah, first-born of thy mother,
When life and hope were new,
Kind playmate of thy brother,
Thy sister, father too;
My light, where'er I go,
My bird, when prison-bound,
My hand in hand companion,—no,
My prayers shall hold thee round.

To say "He has departed"—
"His voice"—"his face"—is gone;
To feel impatient-hearted,
Yet feel we must bear on;
Ah, I could not endure
To whisper of such woe,
Unless I felt this sleep ensure
That it will not be so.

Yes, still he's fix'd, and sleeping!
This silence too the while—
It's very hush and creeping
Seem whispering us a smile:
Something divine and dim
Seems going by one's ear,
Like parting wings of Seraphim,
Who say, "We've finished here."

PETRARCH'S CONTEMPLATIONS OF DEATH

IN THE BOWER OF LAURA.

LEIGH HUNT.

CLEAR, fresh, and dulcet streams,
Which the fair shape who seems
To me sole woman, haunted at noon-tide;
Fair bough, so gently fit,
(I sigh to think of it)
Which lent a pillar to her lovely side;
And turf, and flowers bright-eyed,
O'er which her folded gown
Flow'd like an angel's down;
And you, O holy air and hush'd,
Where first my heart at her sweet glances gush'd;
Give ear, give ear with one consenting,
To my last words, my last, and my lamenting.

If 'tis my fate below,
And heaven will have it so,
That love must close these dying eyes in tears,
May my poor dust be laid
In middle of your shade,
While my soul naked mounts to its own spheres.
The thought would calm my fears,
When taking, out of breath,
The doubtful step of death;
For never could my spirit find
A stiller port after the stormy wind;
Nor in more calm, abstracted bourne,
Slip from my travaill'd flesh, and from my bones outworn.

Perhaps, some future hour
To her accustomed bower
Might come the untamed, and yet the gentle she;
And where she saw me first,
Might turn with eyes athirst
And kinder joy to look again for me;
Then, oh the charity!
Seeing amidst the stones
The earth that held my bones,
A sigh for very love at last
Might ask of Heaven to pardon me the past:
And Heaven itself could not say nay,
As with her gentle veil she wiped the tears away.

How well I call to mind,
When from those boughs the wind
Shook down upon her bosom flower on flower;
And there she sat, meek-eyed
In midst of all that pride,
Sprinkled and blushing through an amorous shower.
Some to her hair paid dower,
And seem'd to dress the curls
Queenlike, with gold and pearls;
Some, snowing, on her drapery stopp'd,
Some on the earth, some on the water dropp'd;
While others, fluttering from above,
Seem'd wheeling round in pomp, and saying, "Here
reigns Love."

How often then I said,
Inward, and fill'd with dread,
"Doubtless this creature came from paradise!"
For at her look the while,
Her voice, and her sweet smile,

And heavenly air, truth parted from mine eyes;
So that, with long-drawn sighs,
I said, as far from men,
"How came I here, and when!"
I had forgotten; and alas!
Fancied myself in heaven, not where I was;
And from that time till this, I bear
Such love for the green bower, I cannot rest elsewhere.

ABOU BEN ADHEM AND THE ANGEL.

LEIGH HUNT.

ABOU BEN ADHEM (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:—
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?"—The vision rais'd its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answer'd, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."

The angel wrote, and vanish'd. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And show'd the names whom love of God had bless'd,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

SONNETS.

LEIGH HUNT.

I.—THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET.

GREEN little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass;

Oh, sweet and tiny cousins, that belong
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine; both though small are strong
At your clear hearts; and both seem given to earth
To ring in thoughtful ears this natural song—
In doors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.

II.—THE NILE.

IT flows through old hush'd Egypt and its sands,
Like some grave mighty thought threading a dream,
And times and things as in that vision, seem
Keeping along it there eternal stands,—
Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands
That roamed through the young world, the glory extreme
Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,
The laughing queen that caught the world's great hands.

Then comes a mightier silence, stern and strong,
As of a world left empty of its throng,
And the void weighs on us; and then we wake,
And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along
'Twixt villages, and think how we shall take
Our own calm journey on for human sake.

III.-V.—THE FISH, THE MAN, AND THE SPIRIT.

(I.)

TO FISH.

YOU strange, astonish'd-looking, angle-faced,
Dreary-mouth'd, gaping wretches of the sea,
Gulping salt-water everlastingly,
Cold-blooded, though with red your blood be graced,
And mute, though dwellers in the roaring waste;
And you, all shapes beside, that fishy be,—
Some round, some flat, some long, all devilry,
Legless, unloving, infamously chaste:—

O scaly, slippery, wet, swift, staring wights,
What is't ye do? what life lead? eh, dull goggles?
How do ye vary your vile days and nights?
How pass your Sundays? Are ye still but joggles
In ceaseless wash? Still naught but gapes, and bites,
And drinks, and stares, diversified with boggles?

(II.)

A FISH ANSWERS.

Amazing monster! that, for aught I know,
With the first sight of thee didst make our race
Forever stare! O flat and shocking face,
Grimly divided from the breast below!
Thou that on dry land horribly dost go
With a split body and most ridiculous pace,
Prong after prong, disgracer of all grace,
Long-useless-finn'd, hair'd, upright, unwet, slow!

O breather of unbreathable, sword-sharp air,
How canst exist? How bear thyself, thou dry
And dreary sloth! What particle canst share
Of the only blessed life, the watery?
I sometimes see of ye an actual *pair*
Go by! link'd fin by fin! most odiously.

(III.)

THE FISH TURNS INTO A MAN, AND THEN INTO A SPIRIT, AND AGAIN SPEAKS.

Indulge thy smiling scorn, if smiling still,
O man! and loathe, but with a sort of love:
For difference must its use by difference prove,
And, in sweet clang, the spheres with music fill.
One of the spirits am I, that at his will
Live in whate'er has life—fish, eagle, dove—
No hate, no pride, beneath nought, nor above,
A visitor of the rounds of God's sweet skill.

Man's life is warm, glad, sad, 'twixt loves and graves,
Boundless in hope, honour'd with pangs austere,
Heaven-gazing; and his angel-wings he craves:
The fish is swift, small-needing, vague yet clear,
A cold, sweet, silver life, wrapp'd in round waves,
Quicken'd with touches of transporting fear.

VI.—ON A LOCK OF MILTON'S HAIR.

IT lies before me there, and my own breath
Stirs its thin outer threads, as though beside
The living head I stood in honour'd pride,
Talking of lovely things that conquer death.
Perhaps he press'd it once, or underneath
Ran his fine fingers, when he leant, blank-eyed,
And saw, in fancy, Adam and his bride
With their rich locks, or his own Delphic wreath.

There seems a love in hair, though it be dead.
It is the gentlest, yet the strongest thread
Of our frail plant,—a blossom from the tree
Surviving the proud trunk ;—as though it said
Patience and Gentleness is Power. In me
Behold affectionate eternity.

RONDEAU.

LEIGH HUNT.

JENNY kiss'd me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in ;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in :
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have miss'd me,
Say I'm growing old, but add,
Jenny kiss'd me.

Thomas Love Peacock.

1785—1866.

THE long life of Thomas Love Peacock was almost entirely uneventful. Born at Weymouth, October 18th, 1785, and mainly educated by his own exertions, he lived for many years entirely for study, reading the principal classics in ancient and modern languages, writing poetry, and making the acquaintance of Shelley, the most beautiful of whose descriptive letters are addressed to him. The first of his satirical novels, "Headlong Hall," appeared in 1815, the last, "Gryll Grange," in 1860. In 1819, he was appointed an assistant examiner at the India House, and became chief examiner, 1836. He showed great ability in this employment, and successfully defended the interests of the East India Company on several occasions. He retired in 1856, and died at Lower Halliford on January 23rd, 1866. Peacock is a remarkable instance of formality and pedantry, of all defects the most incompatible with poetry, co-existing with a genuine lyrical inspiration. His long poems, such as "Rhododaphne," and "The Genius of the Thames," though worthy of respect for their intellectual power and purity of diction, are still laborious set exercises, the work of one who is dèliberately trying to make himself a poet. Who could have expected that from the lips of him who seemed so utterly to misconceive the

nature of poetry should come gushes and snatches of song almost birdlike in their sweetness and simplicity? Such praise is deserved by very many of the lyrics strewn up and down the author's novels, almost always remarkable for their tunefulness and their artistic unity of feeling, joyous or pathetic. "Seamen Three" and "Love and Age" are as powerful expressions of their respective sentiments in easy verse as could well be found, and other pieces are hardly inferior. "The Grave of Love" is one of the most graceful of his earlier lyrics:—

"I dug, beneath the cypress shade,
What well might seem an elfin's grave;
And every pledge in earth I laid,
That erst thy false affection gave.

"I pressed them down the sod beneath;
I placed one mossy stone above;
And twined the rose's fading wreath
Around the sepulchre of love.

"Frail as thy love, the flowers were dead,
Ere yet the evening sun was set:
But years shall see the cypress spread,
Immutable as my regret."

Peacock's straightforward manner and clearness of head also qualified him in an especial manner for ballad poetry, of which "Gwenwynwyn the Bold," perhaps better known as "The Pool of the Diving Friar" (pp. 343-6), is a masterpiece. His rank as a lyrist is not so high as his rank as a humourist, but it is equally honourable and equally secure.

RICHARD GARNETT.

HEADLONG HALL.

1815.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

SONG.

(FROM CHAPTER V.)

I.

IN his last binn Sir Peter lies,
  Who knew not what it was to frown:
Death took him mellow, by surprise,
  And in his cellar stopped him down.
Through all our land we could not boast
  A knight more gay, more prompt than he,
To rise and fill a bumper toast,
  And pass it round with THREE TIMES THREE.

II.

None better knew the feast to sway,
  Or keep Mirth's boat in better trim;
For Nature had but little clay
  Like that of which she moulded him.
The meanest guest that graced his board
  Was there the freest of the free,
His bumper toast when Peter poured,
  And passed it round with THREE TIMES THREE.

III.

He kept at true good humour's mark
  The social flow of pleasure's tide:
He never made a brow look dark,
  Nor caused a tear, but when he died.
No sorrow round his tomb should dwell:
  More pleased his gay old ghost would be,
For funeral song, and passing bell,
  To hear no sound but THREE TIMES THREE.

MELINCOURT.

1817.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

I.

THE TOMB OF LOVE.

(FROM CHAPTER IX.)

I.

By the mossy weed-flow'r'd column,
  Where the setting moonbeams glance,
Streams a radiance cold and solemn
  On the haunts of old romance:
Know'st thou what those shafts betoken,
  Scatter'd on that tablet lone,
Where the ivory bow lies broken
  By the monumental stone?

II.

When true knighthood's shield, neglected,
  Moulder'd in the empty hall;
When the charms that shield protected
  Slept in death's eternal thrall;
When chivalric glory perish'd
  Like the pageant of a dream,
Love in vain its memory cherish'd,
  Fired in vain the minstrel's theme.

III.

Falsehood to an elfish minion
  Did the form of Love impart;
Cunning plumed its vampire pinion;
  Avarice tipp'd its golden dart.
Love, the hideous phantom flying,
  Hither came, no more to rove:
There his broken bow is lying
  On that stone—the tomb of Love!

II.

THE FLOWER OF LOVE.

(FROM CHAPTER XVII.)

I.

'TIS said the rose is Love's own flower,
Its blush so bright, its thorns so many;
And winter on its bloom has power,
But has not on its sweetness any.
For though young Love's ethereal rose
Will droop on Age's wintry bosom,
Yet still its faded leaves disclose
The fragrance of their earliest blossom.

II.

But ah! the fragrance lingering there
Is like the sweets that mournful duty
Bestows with sadly-soothing care,
To deck the grave of bloom and beauty.
For when its leaves are shrunk and dry,
Its blush extinct, to kindle never,
That fragrance is but Memory's sigh,
That breathes of pleasures past for ever.

III.

Why did not Love the amaranth choose,
That bears no thorns, and cannot perish?
Alas! no sweets its flowers diffuse,
And only sweets Love's life can cherish.
But be the rose and amaranth twined,
And Love, their mingled powers assuming,
Shall round his brows a chaplet bind,
For ever sweet, for ever blooming.

NIGHTMARE ABBEY.

1817.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

SEAMEN THREE.

(FROM CHAPTER XI.)

I.

SEAMEN three! What men be ye?
Gotham's three wise men we be.
Whither in your bowl so free?
To rake the moon from out the sea.
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine
And our ballast is old wine;
And your ballast is old wine.

II.

Who art thou, so fast adrift?
I am he they call Old Care.
Here on board we will thee lift.
No: I may not enter there.
Wherefore so? 'Tis Love's decree,
In a bowl Care may not be;
In a bowl Care may not be.

III.

Fear ye not the waves that roll?
No: in charmed bowl we swim.
What the charm that floats the bowl?
Water may not pass the brim.
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine;
And your ballast is old wine.

RHODODAPHNE.

1818.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

I.

THE SPELL OF THE LAUREL-ROSE.

(FROM CANTO II.)

"Oh youth, beware! that laurel-rose
Around Larissa's evil walls
In tufts of rank luxuriance grows,
'Mid dreary valleys, by the falls
Of haunted streams; and magic knows
No herb or plant of deadlier might,
When impious footsteps wake by night
The echoes of those dismal dells,
What time the murky midnight dew
Trembles on many a leaf and blossom,
That draws from earth's polluted bosom
Mysterious virtue, to imbue
The chalice of unnatural spells.
Oft, those dreary rocks among,
The murmurs of unholy song,
Breathed by lips as fair as hers
By whose false hands that flower was given,
The solid earth's firm breast have riven,
And burst the silent sepulchres,
And called strange shapes of ghastly fear,
To hold, beneath the sickening moon,
Portentous parle, at night's deep noon,
With beauty skilled in mysteries drear.
Oh, youth! Larissa's maids are fair,

But the dæmons of the earth and air
Their spells obey, their councils share,
And wide o'er earth and ocean bear
Their mandates to the storms that tear
The rock-enrooted oak, and sweep
With whirlwind wings the labouring deep.
Their words of power can make the streams
Roll refluent on their mountain-springs,
Can torture sleep with direful dreams,
And on the shapes of earthly things,
Man, beast, bird, fish, with influence strange,
Breathe foul and fearful interchange,
And fix in marble bonds the form
Erewhile with natural being warm,
And give to senseless stones and stocks
Motion, and breath, and shape that mocks,
As far as nicest eye can scan,
The action and the life of man.
Beware! yet once again beware!
Ere round thy inexperienced mind,
With voice and semblance falsely fair,
A chain Thessalian magic bind,
Which never more, oh youth! believe,
Shall either earth or heaven unweave."

II.

II.—THE VENGEANCE OF BACCHUS.

(FROM CANTO V.)

"BACCHUS by the lonely ocean
Stood in youthful semblance fair:
Summer winds, with gentle motion,
Waved his black and curling hair.

Streaming from his manly shoulders
Robes of gold and purple dye
Told of spoil to fierce beholders
In their black ship sailing by.
On the vessel's deck they placed him
Strongly bound in triple bands;
But the iron rings that braced him
Melted, wax-like, from his hands.
Then the pilot spake in terror:
'Tis a god in mortal form!
Seek the land; repair your error
Ere his wrath invoke the storm!'
'Silence!' cried the frowning master,
'Mind the helm, the breeze is fair:
Coward! cease to bode disaster:
Leave to men the captive's care!'
While he speaks, and fiercely tightens
In the full free breeze the sail,
From the deck wine bubbling lightens,
Winy fragrance fills the gale.
Gurgling in ambrosial lustre
Flows the purple-eddying wine:
O'er the yard-arms trail and cluster
Tendrils of the mantling vine:
Grapes, beneath the broad leaves springing,
Blushing as in vintage-hours,
Droop, while round the tall mast clinging
Ivy twines its buds and flowers,
Fast with graceful berries blackening:—
Garlands hang on every oar:
Then in fear the cordage slackening,
One and all, they cry, 'To shore!'
Bacchus changed his shape, and glaring
With a lion's eye-balls wide,

Roared : the pirate-crew, despairing,
Plunged amid the foaming tide.
Through the azure depths they flitted
Dolphins by transforming fate :
But the god the pilot pitied,
Saved, and made him rich and great."

THE MISFORTUNES OF ELPHIN.

1829.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

THE WAR-SONG OF DINAS VAWR.

(FROM CHAPTER XI.)

I.

THE mountain sheep are sweeter,
But the valley sheep are fatter;
We therefore deem'd it meeter
To carry off the latter.
We made an expedition;
We met a host and quell'd it;
We forced a strong position,
And kill'd the men who held it.

II.

On Dyfed's richest valley,
Where herds of kine were browsing,
We made a mighty sally,
To furnish our carousing.
Fierce warriors rushed to meet us;
We met them, and o'erthrew them:
They struggled hard to beat us;
But we conquer'd them, and slew them.

III.

As we drove our prize at leisure,
The king march'd forth to catch us:
His rage surpass'd all measure,
But his people could not match us.
He fled to his hall-pillars;
And, ere our force we led off,
Some sack'd his house and cellars,
While others cut his head off.

IV.

We there, in strife bewild'ring,
Spilt blood enough to swim in:
We orphan'd many children,
And widow'd many women.
The eagles and the ravens
We glutted with our foemen:
The heroes and the cravens,
The spearmen and the bowmen.

V.

We brought away from battle,
And much their land bemoan'd them,
Two thousand head of cattle,
And the head of him who owned them:
Ednyfed, King of Dyfed,
His head was borne before us;
His wine and beasts supplied our feasts,
And his overthrow, our chorus.

CROCHET CASTLE.

1330.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

I.—LLYN-Y-DREIDDIAD-VRAWD.

The Pool of the Diving Friar.

(FROM CHAPTER XVI.)

GWENWYNWYN withdrew from the feasts of his hall;
He slept very little, he prayed not at all;
He pondered, and wandered, and studied alone;
And sought, night and day, the philosopher's stone.

He found it at length, and he made its first proof
By turning to gold all the lead of his roof:
Then he bought some magnanimous heroes, all fire,
Who lived but to smite and be smitten for hire.

With these, on the plains like a torrent he broke;
He filled the whole country with flame and with smoke;
He killed all the swine, and he broached all the wine;
He drove off the sheep, and the beeves, and the kine;

He took castles and towns; he cut short limbs and lives;
He made orphans and widows of children and wives:
This course many years he triumphantly ran,
And did mischief enough to be called a great man.

When, at last, he had gained all for which he had striven,
He bethought him of buying a passport to heaven;

Good and great as he was, yet he did not well know
How soon, or which way, his great spirit might go.

He sought the gray friars, who, beside a wild stream,
Refected their frames on a primitive scheme;
The gravest and wisest Gwenwynwyn found out,
All lonely and ghostly, and angling for trout.

Below the white dash of a mighty cascade,
Where a pool of the stream a deep resting-place made,
And rock-rooted oaks stretched their branches on high,
The friar stood musing, and throwing his fly.

To him said Gwenwynwyn, "Hold, father, here's store,
For the good of the Church, and the good of the poor;"
Then he gave him the stone; but, ere more he could speak,
Wrath came on the friar, so holy and meek:

He had stretched forth his hand to receive the red gold,
And he thought himself mocked by Gwenwynwyn the Bold;
And in scorn at the gift, and in rage at the giver,
He jerked it immediately into the river.

Gwenwynwyn, aghast, not a syllable spake;
The philosopher's stone made a duck and a drake;
Two systems of circles a moment were seen,
And the stream smoothed them off, as they never had been.

Gwenwynwyn regained, and uplifted his voice:
"Oh, friar, gray friar, full rash was thy choice;
The stone, the good stone, which away thou hast thrown,
Was the stone of all stones, the philosopher's stone!"

The friar looked pale, when his error he knew;
The friar looked red, and the friar looked blue;
And heels over head, from the point of a rock
He plunged, without stopping to pull off his frock.

He dived very deep, but he dived all in vain,
The prize he had slighted he found not again:
Many times did the friar his diving renew,
And deeper and deeper the river still grew.

Gwenwynwyn gazed long, of his senses in doubt,
To see the gray friar a diver so stout:
Then slowly and sadly his castle he sought,
And left the friar diving, like dabchick distraught.

Gwenwynwyn fell sick with alarm and despite,
Died, and went to the devil, the very same night:
The magnanimous heroes he held in his pay
Sacked his castle, and marched with the plunder away.

No knell in the silence of midnight was rolled
For the flight of the soul of Gwenwynwyn the Bold;
The brethren, unfeed, let the mighty ghost pass
Without praying a prayer, or intoning a mass.

The friar haunted ever beside the dark stream;
The philosopher's stone was his thought and his dream:
And day after day, ever head under heels,
He dived, all the time he could spare from his meals.

He dived, and he dived, to the end of his days,
As the peasants oft witnessed with fear and amaze:
The mad friar's diving-place long was their theme,
And no plummet can fathom that pool of the stream.

And still, when light clouds on the midnight winds ride,
If by moonlight you stray on the lone river-side,
The ghost of the friar may be seen diving there,
With head in the water, and heels in the air.

II.—"IN THE DAYS OF OLD."

(FROM CHAPTER XVIII.)

IN the days of old,
Lovers felt true passion,
Deeming years of sorrow
By a smile repaid.
Now the charms of gold,
Spells of pride and fashion,
Bid them say good morrow
To the best-loved maid.

Through the forests wild,
O'er the mountains lonely,
They were never weary
Honour to pursue:
If the damsel smiled
Once in seven years only,
All their wanderings dreary
Ample guerdon knew.

Now one day's caprice
Weighs down years of smiling,
Youthful hearts are rovers,
Love is bought and sold:
Fortune's gifts may cease,
Love is less beguiling;
Wiser were the lovers,
In the days of old.

GRYLL GRANGE.

1860.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

I.—THE DEATH OF PHILEMON.

(FROM CHAPTER XI.)

I.

CLOSED was Philemon's hundredth year:
The theatre was thronged to hear
His last completed play:
In the mid scene, a sudden rain
Dispersed the crowd—to meet again
On the succeeding day.

He sought his home, and slept, and dreamed.
Nine maidens through his door, it seemed,
Passed to the public street.
He asked them, "Why they left his home?"
They said, "A guest will hither come,
We must not stay to meet."

He called his boy with morning light,
Told him the vision of the night,
And bade his play be brought.
His finished page again he scanned,
Resting his head upon his hand,
Absorbed in studious thought.

He knew not what the dream foreshowed:
That nought divine may hold abode
Where death's dark shade is felt:
And therefore were the Muses nine
Leaving the old poetic shrine,
Where they so long had dwelt.

II.

The theatre was thronged once more,
More thickly than the day before,
To hear the half-heard song.
The day wore on. Impatience came.
They called upon Philemon's name,
With murmurs loud and long.

Some sought at length his studious cell,
And to the stage returned, to tell
What thousands strove to ask.
"The poet we have been to seek
Sate with his hand upon his cheek,
As pondering o'er his task.

"We spoke. He made us no reply.
We reverentially drew nigh,
And twice our errand told.
He answered not. We drew more near:
The awful mystery then was clear:
We found him stiff and cold.

"Struck by so fair a death, we stood
Awhile in sad admiring mood:
Then hastened back, to say
That he, the praised and loved of all,
Is deaf for ever to your call:
That on this self-same day,

"When here presented should have been
The close of his fictitious scene,
His life's true scene was o'er:
We seemed, in solemn silence awed,
To hear the 'Farewell and applaud,'
Which he may speak no more.

"Of tears the rain gave prophecy:
The nuptial dance of comedy
Yields to the funeral train.
Assemble where his pyre must burn:
Honour his ashes in their urn:
And on another day return
To hear his songs again."

II.—LOVE AND AGE.

(FROM CHAPTER XV.)

I PLAYED with you 'mid cowslips blowing,
When I was six and you were four;
When garlands weaving, flower-balls throwing,
Were pleasures soon to please no more.
Through groves and meads, o'er grass and heather,
With little playmates, to and fro,
We wandered hand in hand together;
But that was sixty years ago.

You grew a lovely roseate maiden,
And still our early love was strong;
Still with no care our days were laden,
They glided joyously along;
And I did love you very dearly,
How dearly words want power to show;
I thought your heart was touched as nearly;
But that was fifty years ago.

Then other lovers came around you,
Your beauty grew from year to year,
And many a splendid circle found you
The centre of its glittering sphere.
I saw you then, first vows forsaking,
On rank and wealth your hand bestow;
Oh, then I thought my heart was breaking,—
But that was forty years ago.

And I lived on, to wed another:
No cause she gave me to repine;
And when I heard you were a mother,
I did not wish the children mine.
My own young flock, in fair progression,
Made up a pleasant Christmas row:
My joy in them was past expression,—
But that was thirty years ago.

You grew a matron plump and comely,
You dwelt in fashion's brightest blaze;
My earthly lot was far more homely;
But I too had my festal days.
No merrier eyes have ever glistened
Around the hearth-stone's wintry glow,
Than when my youngest child was christened,—
But that was twenty years ago.

Time passed. My eldest girl was married,
And I am now a grandsire gray;
One pet of four years old I've carried
Among the wild-flowered meads to play.
In our old fields of childish pleasure,
Where now, as then, the cowslips blow,
She fills her basket's ample measure,—
And that is not ten years ago.

But though first love's impassioned blindness
Has passed away in colder light,
I still have thought of you with kindness,
And shall do, till our last good-night.
The ever-rolling silent hours
Will bring a time we shall not know,
When our young days of gathering flowers
Will be an hundred years ago.

Bryan Waller Procter.

1787—1874.

To be a welcome guest on Mount Parnassus has been the lot of many who have had no dwelling there: some of whom have paid for hospitality with inspiration and live in song they had the power to fire but not to sing. William Lisle Bowles is still remembered for his association with Coleridge, though his own muse has ceased to charm; Matthew Gregory Lewis is still mentioned in connection with the "Tales of Wonder," that drew from Sir Walter Scott the ballad of "The Eve of St. John," though his own verse is read no more; and Bryan Waller Procter, better known as Barry Cornwall, skilled in what Wordsworth called the accomplishment of verse, but lacking in the qualities that can alone make poetry permanent, will live in his association with the many gifted men who shared his life and love.

Born in Leeds on November 21st, 1787, he was sent to Harrow, where he had for schoolfellows the boys who afterwards became famous as Lord Byron and Sir Robert Peel. Choosing law as his profession he was articled to a solicitor in Wiltshire, and subsequently entered the office of a conveyancer in London. In 1819 he published his "Dramatic Scenes," a work which was followed in 1820 by his "Marcian Colonna," and in 1821 by "Sicilian Story" and "Mirandola," a tragedy produced at Covent

Garden Theatre, on January 9th of that same year, with complete success. Macready and Kemble played the principal parts (Mirandola and Guido) and Miss Foote played Isidora. The published edition of the play ran through three editions in a few months. The "Flood of Thessaly" followed in 1823, and "English Songs" in 1832. He also wrote a "Life of Edmund Kean" (1835), and a "Memoir of Charles Lamb" (1866). He was called to the Bar in 1831, and afterwards became a Commissioner in Lunacy, which office he held until 1861.

Barry Cornwall never fulfilled the promise of his early years, but the amiability of his character and his unenvious appreciation of the merits of others endeared him to all the privileged circle of his acquaintance. His gift was dramatic, and nearly all his work, whether of lyrical or dramatic form, was of that objective impersonal character that owes its origin to skill in art rather than force in nature. Some of his songs are likely to hold their own for a long time yet, partly on their own account, and partly because they have had the good fortune to secure singularly effective setting at the hands of able musicians. His familiar epistle to Robert Browning is of interest on account of its subject, and for the genial personality that throbs through it. Writing about 1846—50, he says:—

"—What news!—I hear that you are gone,—have won
A bride, and dwell upon Italian ground,—
Near Fiesole or Florence,—where the sound
Of Arno, murmuring from his mountain springs,
Comes daily by your door,
And sings, and sings,
At times, (midst every-day familiar things,)

Of the mighty dead,—once 'pacers of the shore:'
Whose words have fill'd the echoing regions round,
Whose names are with the Stars, for evermore!

"Well!—I must send you, still, across the sea,
A friend's good wishes,—kind as kind may be,
For happiness, for health, for wealth, for fame,—
Though you're not one to play the golden game
With Fortune,—rather you will pause and bend
The laurel 'round the forehead of some friend,
Dreaming you are not hid in noble bays,
Ay, praised by poets,—who too seldom praise!

"All good be thine! Thou'lt win a name of might,
So thou wilt but obey thy Genius duly;
Live; labour; do thy true Soul's bidding truly,
Thro' morn and noon, and eve, and thoughtful night!
Clear be thy dreams! thy lines like arrowy light!
Pour out thy rich sweet numbers! Freely sing!
Soar freely, like the eagle strong of wing!
Or, if needs be, descend
Amongst the poor and those who have no friend!
Into their cellar-homes seek thou thy way,
And lift their dark Romances into day!

* * * * * *

"Would I could rise (with thee) on airier wing,
And scale the enchanted regions ere I die,
And hear that true song which the Muses sing
At morning, on their mountains near the sky,
And there through starry evening listening lie,
While the deep melodies are born, that flow
From heavenly lips, teaching the world below!—
But idle wishes these!
Although they serve to please
And soothe the humours of a wayward mind.
My life is nearly spent, and left behind:
And what remains is brief, and weak, and old:
Therefore I call on *Thee*, a Spirit bold,
And able to maintain the poet's gage,
To stamp thy fame, in lines of burning gold,
Upon the page

Of everlasting adamant, where lie
The few great names which Memory
Has rescued from the oblivious deep Abyss!
—Spurn not good counsel, even in verse like this.
Summon thy spirit! Grasp thine arms,—(the best);
Plunge in the strife,—and Fate will do the rest.

The poet, who lived to the great age of eighty-seven, died October 4th, 1874, surviving his daughter Adelaide Anne Procter, who had more than her father's gifts in song, ten years. Among the younger men who joined the poet's charmed circle in later years was Mr. Swinburne who laid a chaplet of *immortelles* on his grave:—

OCTOBER 4TH, 1874.

"In the garden of death, where the singers whose names are
One with another make music unheard of men, [deathless
Where the dead sweet roses fade not of lips long breathless,
And the fair eyes shine that shall weep not or change again,
Who comes now crowned with the blossom of snow-white years?
What music is this that the world of the dead men hears?

"Beloved of men, whose words on our lips were honey,
Whose name in our ears and our fathers' ears was sweet,
Like summer gone forth of the land his songs made sunny, [meet,
To the beautiful veiled bright world where the glad ghosts
Child, father, bridegroom and bride, and anguish and rest,
No soul shall pass of a singer than this more blest.

* * * * * *

"Time takes them home that we loved, fair names and famous,
To the soft long sleep, to the broad sweet bosom of death;
But the flower of their souls he shall take not away to shame us,
Nor the lips lack song forever that now lack breath.
For with us shall the music and perfume that die not dwell,
Though the dead to our dead bid welcome, and we farewell."

ALFRED H. MILES.

SONGS.

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER (BARRY CORNWALL).

I.—THE SEA.

THE Sea! the Sea! the open Sea!
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!
Without a mark, without a bound,
It runneth the earth's wide regions 'round;
It plays with the cloud; it mocks the skies;
Or like a cradled creature lies.

I'm on the Sea! I'm on the Sea!
I am where I would ever be;
With the blue above, and the blue below,
And silence wheresoe'er I go;
If a storm should come and awake the deep,
What matter? *I* shall ride and sleep.

I love (oh! *how* I love) to ride
On the fierce foaming bursting tide,
When every mad wave drowns the moon,
Or whistles aloft his tempest tune,
And tells how goeth the world below,
And why the south-west blasts do blow.

I never was on the dull tame shore,
But I lov'd the great Sea more and more,
And backwards flew to her billowy breast.
Like a bird that seeketh its mother's nest;
And a mother she *was*, and *is* to me;
For I was born on the open Sea!

The waves were white, and red the morn,
In the noisy hour when I was born;
And the whale it whistled, the porpoise rolled,
And the dolphins bared their backs of gold;
And never was heard such an outcry wild
As welcomed to life the Ocean-child!

I've lived since then, in calm and strife,
Full fifty summers a sailor's life,
With wealth to spend and a power to range,
But never have sought, nor sighed for change;
And Death, whenever he come to me,
Shall come on the wild unbounded Sea!

II.—HERMIONE.

THOU hast beauty bright and fair,
Manner noble, aspect free,
Eyes that are untouched by care:
What then do we ask from thee?
Hermione, Hermione!

Thou hast reason quick and strong,
Wit that envious men admire,
And a voice, itself a song!
What then can we still desire?
Hermione, Hermione!

Something thou dost want, O queen!
(As the gold doth ask alloy,)
Tears,—amidst thy laughter seen,
Pity,—mingling with thy joy.
This is all we ask, from thee,
Hermione, Hermione!

III.—THE HUNTER'S SONG.

RISE! Sleep no more: 'Tis a noble morn.
The dews hang thick on the fringèd thorn:
And the frost shrinks back, like a beaten hound,
Under the steaming steaming ground.
Behold, where the billowy clouds flow by,
And leave us alone in the clear gray sky!
Our horses are ready and steady—So, ho!
I'm gone, like a dart from the Tartar's bow.
Hark, hark!—Who calleth the maiden Morn,
From her sleep in the woods and the stubble corn?
The horn,—the horn!
The merry sweet ring of the hunter's horn.

Now,—Thorough the copse, where the fox is found,
And over the brook, at a mighty bound,
And over the high lands, and over the low,
O'er furrows, o'er meadows the hunters go!
Away!—as a hawk flies full at its prey,
So flieth the hunter, away,—away!
From the burst at the cover, till set of sun,
When the red fox dies and—the day is done!
Hark, hark!—What sound on the wind is borne?
'Tis the conquering voice of the hunter's horn.
The horn,—the horn!
The merry bold voice of the hunter's horn.

Sound! Sound the horn! To the hunter good
What's the gulley deep or the roaring flood?
Right over he bounds, as the wild stag bounds,
At the heels of his swift, sure, silent hounds.
Oh!—*what* delight can a mortal lack,
When he once is firm on his horse's back,

With his stirrups short, and his snaffle strong,
And the blast of the horn for his morning song?
Hark, hark!—Now, home! and dream till morn,
Of the bold sweet sound of the hunter's horn!
The horn,—the horn!
Oh, the sound of all sounds is the hunter's horn!

IV.—A BACCHANALIAN SONG.

SING!—Who sings
To her who weareth a hundred rings?
Ah, who is this lady fine?
The VINE, boys, the VINE!
The mother of mighty Wine.
A roamer is she
O'er wall and tree,
And sometimes very good company.

Drink!—Who drinks
To her who blusheth and never thinks?
Ah, who is this maid of thine!
The GRAPE, boys, the GRAPE!
O, never let her escape
Until she be turned to Wine!
For better is she,
Than vine can be,
And very very good company!

Dream!—who dreams
Of the God that governs a thousand streams?
Ah, who is this Spirit fine?
'Tis WINE, boys, 'tis WINE!
God Bacchus, a friend of mine.
O better is he
Than grape or tree,
And the best of all good company.

V.—THE HISTORY OF A LIFE.

DAY dawned:—Within a curtained room,
Filled to faintness with perfume,
A lady lay at point of doom.

Day closed:—A Child had seen the light;
But for the lady, fair and bright,
She rested in undreaming night.

Spring rose:—The lady's grave was green
And near it oftentimes was seen
A gentle Boy, with thoughtful mien.

Years fled:—He wore a manly face,
And struggled in the world's rough race,
And won, at last, a lofty place.

And then—he died! Behold, before ye,
Humanity's poor sum and story;
Life,—Death,—and all that is of Glory.

VI.—A PETITION TO TIME.

TOUCH us gently, Time!
Let us glide adown thy stream
Gently,—as we sometimes glide
Through a quiet dream!
Humble voyagers are We,
Husband, wife, and children three—
(One is lost,—an angel, fled
To the azure overhead!)

Touch us gently, Time!
We've not proud nor soaring wings:
Our ambition, *our* content
Lies in simple things.

Humble voyagers are We,
O'er Life's dim unsounded sea,
Seeking only some calm clime :—
Touch us *gently*, gentle Time!

VII.—SIT DOWN, SAD SOUL.

SIT down, sad soul, and count
The moments flying :
Come,—tell the sweet amount
That's lost by sighing!
How many smiles ?—a score ?
Then laugh, and count no more ;
For day is dying!

Lie down, sad soul, and sleep,
And no more measure
The flight of Time, nor weep
The loss of leisure ;
But here, by this lone stream,
Lie down with us, and dream
Of starry treasure!

We dream : do thou the same :
We love—for ever :
We laugh ; yet few we shame,
The gentle, never.
Stay, then, till Sorrow dies ;
Then—hope and happy skies
Are thine for ever!

VIII.—FINIS.

MY soul is sinking
To deep repose.
Friends, come around me
At Life's dark close.

No bell be sounding,
No tears abounding;
I leave behind me
The world's sad woes.

Soft smiles attend me
Whene'er I fly—
Good prayers befriend me,
From earth and sky.
Sweet hearts be near me;
Kind angels hear me:
A sound?—They call me:
I die,—I die!

IX.—SING A LOW SONG.

SING a low song!
A tender cradling measure, soft and low,
Not sad nor long,
But such as we remember long ago,
When Time, now old, was flying
Over the sunny seasons, bright and fleet,
And the red rose was lying
Amongst a crowd of flowers all too sweet.

Sing o'er the bier!
The bell is swinging in the time-worn tower:
He's gone who late was here,
As fresh as manhood in its lustiest hour.
A song to each brief season,
Winter and shining Summer, doth belong,
For some sweet human reason,—
O'er cradle or the coffin still a song.

FOR MUSIC.

NOW whilst he dreams, O Muses, wind him round!
Send down thy silver words, O murmuring Rain!
Haunt him, sweet Music! Fall, with gentlest sound,—
Like dew, like night, upon his weary brain!
Come, Odours of the rose and violet,—bear
Into his charmèd sleep all visions fair!
So may the lost be found,
So may his thoughts by tender Love be crowned,
And Hope come shining like a vernal morn,
And with its beams adorn
The Future, till he breathes diviner air,
In some soft Heaven of joy, beyond the range of Care!

FOR A FOUNTAIN.

REST! This little Fountain runs
Thus for aye:—It never stays
For the look of summer suns,
Nor the cold of winter days.
Whosoe'er shall wander near,
When the Syrian heat is worst,
Let him hither come, nor fear
Lest he may not slake his thirst:
He will find this little river
Running still, as bright as ever.
Let him drink, and onwards hie,
Bearing but in thought, that I,
EROTAS, bade the Naiad fall,
And thank the great god Pan for all!

Lord Byron.

1788—1824.

The fame and influence of Byron are European. And, with deductions, his work has stood the test of time. The best judges on the Continent, and at home, still allow him his place among the greater lights of our poetical firmament, although the fervent splendour of that early vogue and enthusiasm, which was partly an accident of the hour, has sobered and faded into the light of common day. Much of that popularity was due to his romantic personality and his fascinating career, which he kept constantly before the public eye; but these cannot have the same interest for a later generation. He was one of our most intensely subjective poets, and drew almost exclusively from his own personal experience. But his general intellectual power was so great that he succeeded in making his own personality interesting to all, by presenting it under many varied disguises, and in many aspects. For it was a very richly developed and endowed, a many-mooded, complex individuality, containing within itself elements sufficient to furnish forth a hundred little ordinary natures. Moreover, it was representative of his age, so that numberless people found in his writings the expression, the powerful expression, of their own indefinite, semi-organised thoughts and feelings. This was a revolutionary

period in politics, an iconoclastic period in religion. And he was a great revolutionary voice in politics, a terrible iconoclastic voice in religion. Again, what he preached, that he also practised. For he actively assisted the Liberal and National causes against temporal and ecclesiastical tyranny. This enhanced a hundredfold the influence of his words. He championed Napoleon, the arch-enemy of legitimacy in Europe, and the sworn foe of his own Government, which made the English very angry; and there can be no doubt that he liked to *pose* to make people stare at him, even were it in horror, to astonish and shock the average conventional person, for whom he felt supreme contempt. There was an element of clap-trap, ostentation, and bravado in his life and in his poetry. But even when he was most unpopular in England he attracted a fascinated and admiring, though angry and condemnatory attention, which did not altogether displease him.

Byron dealt mostly with the simple, primitive feelings and passions familiar to all; those of love, hatred, revenge. Nor was there any profundity of thought in his writings to give the ready reader pause. His early tales were warm and sunny, not only with human passion, but with pictures of Eastern scenery, steeped in a glowing atmosphere, at that time unfamiliar to the colder north. And the central figure in all of them was a man, young, beautiful, amorous, brave, highborn, successful, hero of many adventures, beloved of fair women; or the same man, melancholy and alone, invested with a romantic halo of picturesque remorse, dwelling apart amid wild and sublime natural scenery, which the poet described with imaginative and graphic

force. He saw it, not as Wordsworth, with minute accuracy, with subtle, dreamful gaze of a heavy-lidded, mystic eye, but from orbs large, limpid, wide, characterised by Coleridge as "very portals of the sun," rapturously alive to all grander and more salient effects of natural phenomena, to stormy wind and tempest, to cloud-capped hoary mountain and turbulent ocean wave. Byron is the man of the world's poet. The modern man or woman of the world cares a little for obviously striking or beautiful scenery as a diversion, a new sensation, when tired of the more congenial city. And while Byron loved Nature with a deep devotion unknown to such as these, resorted to her as a healer, as a revealer of spiritual truths—being indeed, with Rousseau, Chateaubriand, and his great English compeers in poetry, co-founder of that Nature-worship which is peculiarly characteristic of our modern time—yet he cared still more for man, for action, for life; he was the poet of youth, adventure, daring feats, young beauty, and fierce passion, of the joy of "life, the mere living;" while in his later work he displayed bitter cynicism, to which nothing seemed sacred when the mood prevailed, which denied and disbelieved even human goodness, upholding only a wanton epicurean self-gratification. But there were noble elements in his greatest and most reprehended work, "Don Juan." The careless man of the world might laugh lightly with him, and enjoy the luscious, sensuous descriptions of human beauty, but *he* could not feel in the poet's brilliant and scathing mockery, the undertone, the after-flavour of misery, of broken-hearted disappointment at finding his ideals

shattered by sad experience, at proving the hollowness and hardness of human hearts, the littleness and sordid alloy of baser motives in our greatest characters, the pretentious impotence of our vastest intellect, our most vaunted scientific discovery. Before him lay bare and naked the harsh and blind self-satisfaction of strict Virtue, her want of intelligent and sisterly sympathy with the tempted weakness of a fellow-mortal, fatuous insensibility to her own, perchance, less amiable sins, stolid, sanctimonious acquiescence in an actual order, which favours upper-class comfort, power, luxury, and conventional respectability, at the expense of innumerable human souls, starved, miserable, degraded, and sinning in coarse ways, unlovely to culture and refinement. What he deemed the cant and hypocrisy of well-to-do English society, and what we now term its Philistinism, the poet of "Don Juan" and the "Vision of Judgment" was never weary of lashing. That with these evils he too often confounded the high devotion, faith, honour, and constancy of domestic affection, so essential to social health and happiness, is not to be denied; and so far his work must be branded as immoral. He himself had the taint of worldliness partly inherited, inborn, partly contracted in the midst of the corrupt high society of his era. Still to have seen through our sham virtues and respectabilities, that serve only to conceal gracefully what is ugly and selfish, corrupt, false, and fraudulent, is no light praise—while the wit and humour of those later poems have seldom been rivalled. Byron is one of the world's great satirists, and it is not often that he ridicules the really innocent, good, and kindly.

Yet his idea of women was far less elevated than one could have desired. His relations with women —chiefly fashionable women—had not given him a high opinion of them; but that was partly his own fault. Yet the memory and image of his sister taught him to create the pure and lovely pictures of Aurora Raby in "Don Juan," of Adah in "Cain." The great ideas in Byron are, free development of individuality, and the right of human reason to question and judge even religiously-guarded, time-honoured axioms, unquestioned and accepted principles; he throws all into the melting-pot, even what was held most sacred. That was an age of revolt, universal inquiry, denial; and Byron's poetry is certainly one of its most potent expressions. He was the great sceptic. But he carried his assertion of individual right so far as to become anti-social. "Manfred," "The Giaour," "Childe Harold," "Lara," "The Corsair," assert their private liberty in pleasure-seeking till it becomes license; and having no social mission, feeling no call to serve mankind, or live social lives amid their fellows, they find the fair fruits of selfish pleasure turn to ashes in their mouths. While retaining their tenderness of heart, their human sympathy, respect for the good opinion of good men, they perish miserably in solitude, consumed by remorse for the injury and ravage they have committed, for the trusting hearts, lightly trampled, they have broken, and their own unfulfilled ideals. Cain defies supernatural authority in the name of conscience and reason, accounted divine, and arraigns the justice and mercy that ordain trial and suffering as the lot of man. He asserts the right of human reason to

question everything; but, like all Byron's heroes, he is out of harmony with himself; discontented, without patient endurance, without reverence for a higher wisdom in nature, without faith—one who, like Manfred, gives the rein to passion, and indulges exorbitant pride; until his crime springs forth inevitably to blast him and his, as the levin-bolt out of the cloud that stored it; these characters are still slaves to their own passions, and not masters of them, therefore weak and unhappy; noble, though confused in their ideals, and unfaithful to them; a war of jarring elements, a chaos, that waits some word from the Most High to become Kosmos. There are magnificent scenes and situations in the dramatic poems of Byron, notably in the finest of them, "Cain." The whole movement, working up to the destruction of Jehovah's altar, and the murder of Abel, together with that crisis itself, are unsurpassed in our literature, as are the concluding portions, exquisite for a tenderness and pathos, rare with Byron, relating to Adah, Cain's sister-wife, their little Enoch, and the curse on Cain. In "Don Juan" we have the experiences of a man of pleasure more fully, frankly, and cynically depicted than the poet has ventured previously to give them. His own debauchery at Venice was largely responsible for the lax tone now adopted. But, on the other hand, the poet's descriptions of active adventure, shipwreck, war, passion, human and natural beauty, had never been so masterly, so perfectly enshrined in fit language and metre as here. The oceanic stanzas rush and bound as with the fulness of youthful strength and exuberant life; the idyl of Haidee and Juan on the island is, for blended

wonder of scenery, loveliness of boy and maid, fresh and passionate love, absolutely unique; or comparable only with *Romeo and Juliet.* But the work is sometimes inordinately spun out, trivial, gossipy, even tedious. It is a remarkable defiance to accepted rules, both in matter and manner. And this was the great champion of *form* in poetry, of the so-called classical art-shackles of the eighteenth century, the uncompromising vindicator of Pope, the critic who preferred Pope to Shakespeare, cultured and conventional Rogers to Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats. Yet he himself was partly classical, and in part belonged to the eighteenth century; for in his dramas he observed the so-called "unity of time and place"—much to their detriment. One good drama he wrote, "Sardanapalus;" but the hero there is again himself—himself in the amiable, epicurean "Don Juan" vein, not in the misanthropic, melancholy vein of "Childe Harold" and "The Giaour." Myrrha, however, is a noble, heroic woman, idealised from "La Guiccioli." Byron was classical also in his diction—a diction never involved, complicated, burdened, labouring with weight of meaning, mystical, redolent of subtle suggestion, like violin tones lingering in the memory—that is the romantic phraseology—but nervous, unique, simple, clear, direct, smiting its meaning into the reader with the force of a sledge hammer, awakening and exhilarating as the blare of trumpet in the van of battle. Yet, in spite of himself, he was destined, as Macaulay has said, to be our great popular leader in the neoromantic literary reform that characterised his period, necessitated by the new attention paid to the "dim common populations," the stirring

political movements at home and abroad, the great wars over sea in distant lands, and nearer home in Europe; to the doubt, testing, challenge, and question of all established principles in government, religion, and morals; to the loving and absorbed contemplation of external nature. All this was bound to burst the shell of polished eighteenth-century diction, appropriate to the delineation of polite life in cities, or merely abstract meditative dissertations upon things in general. And the revolutionary genius with heart and soul condemned the stupid "tenth transmitters" of foolish faces among whom he was born, they in turn looking half fearfully, half indignantly askance upon so strange a putative ugly duckling, *née* swan. The time was one of conflicting winds and tides, of turbulent tempests, loud and wild with birth throes, and this poet was its very elect genius. Hence conflicting elements in his art, as in his own soul and private life, which made him, like Carlyle, though for a different reason, "*Gae ill to live with.*" Since that epoch we have seen a tentative reconstruction, with the aid of modern science, German metaphysics, a broad theology, and a novel politico-social philosophy. Of this some eminent modern poets have made themselves organs. The constructive architectonic art was not a strong point with Byron. "Childe Harold" was a poet's pilgrimage through various scenes and countries that interested him, and has no unity beyond what it derives from the pervading presence of one melancholy, contemplative figure. But the poem is instinct with permanent vitality from the vigorous presentation of great historic personalities, or memorable events of human

life, which occurred amid those scenes, that are themselves so beautifully depicted with a few broad and telling strokes of a master-pencil. The earlier cantos, written in the poet's youth, are, however, very inferior to the later; they are only graceful, interesting, romantic; although these, together with the "Tales," were indeed the rather slight foundations of Byron's immense vogue and popularity. It was not until after Byron had suffered from disappointment, injustice, and hatred, that his true quality first appeared. The affected, sentimental, and languid misanthropy, so delightful to gilded drawing-rooms, became the bitter, scathing despair of a wounded nature that alarmed, a fierce revolutionary frenzy that shocked. The strong red wine was trodden out of his heart's wine press by cruel trampling feet. While he was a prosperous, idle, caressed, and fêted dandy, he produced little of value. Had he died earlier he would have been but a nine days' wonder, and no more. Later he showed the strong grasp of a poet's sympathy with human woe, as human, leaning over dim centuries to embrace the gladiator, dying on a Roman arena; gave us the requiem of departed empire in his verse on Rome; stirred the heart of patriotism in "Waterloo"—having been made free of the sublime secrets of storm, ocean, and mountain, gave voice to them in many a sounding stanza; sung, too, the passion of martyred genius, and humbler hearts, broken on the world's wheel for noble causes in the "Prophecy of Dante," the "Prisoner of Chillon," and "Prometheus." The later tales, "Chillon" and "Mazeppa," are incomparably better in construction than the earlier. Byron has been absurdly depreciated by certain

modern metrists, because he never obtained mastery over blank verse, which, truly enough, no great poet ever wrote so badly; but he was an adept in the Spenserian measure, and in *Ottava rima.* A few exquisite lyrics, and lyrical passages, too, he has given us; but his brief poems remained often rather wooden, common-place, without distinction; lacked the "lyrical cry;" yet what can exceed the glorious ring of the "Isles of Greece," or the tender, lingering music of "Thou art dead," the lines to Thyrza?

George Gordon Byron was born in Holles Street, London, January 22nd, 1788. His father, Captain Byron, commonly called "Mad Jack Byron," a handsome rake and spendthrift, ran away with Lord Carmarthen's wife, and after her divorce from the Marquis married her. Augusta, the poet's half-sister, was the offspring of this union. On the death of his first wife, Captain Byron married Catherine Gordon, of Gight, who bore him an only child, the poet. On both sides his ancestry was illustrious, and he was very proud of it. The Byrons came over with the Conqueror, and distinguished themselves at the siege of Calais under Edward III., as well as at Cressy, Bosworth, and Marston Moor. In the reign of Charles I., Sir John Byron was created Baron Byron, of Rochdale. Admiral Byron, the poet's grandfather, was called "Foulweather Jack," from his misfortunes at sea. He suffered shipwreck, and wrote a very graphic account of his adventures, party utilised in "Don Juan." The grand-uncle, and predecessor in the title of the poet, was called "the wicked Lord," and had killed his neighbour, Mr. Chaworth in a very ugly duel in the room of an inn, by candle-light. He

was afterwards generally shunned as an "uncanny" person, living and dying in a sort of savage seclusion at Newstead Abbey, which had been granted to the family by Henry VIII., at the dissolution of the monasteries. The poet's mother was descended from James I., through the Earl of Huntley, who had married the king's daughter. Captain Byron ran through Miss Gordon's fortune in a very short time, and deserted her not long after the child's birth. With George, she, for some years, resided at Aberdeen, in much poverty. As a child, he was of a violent temper, and had fits of what he termed "sullen rages;" but he was sweet and amiable with those by whom he was kindly and judiciously treated. His mother, though fond of him, was the very worst person, apparently, to whom Fate could have entrusted this wayward, beautiful, sensitive, inharmoniously constituted son of genius. She was violent and hysterical, alternately spoiling the child, and treating him with harsh fury. He had a deformity of the foot, which was aggravated by the treatment of ignorant surgeons, and in her anger she would taunt him as "a lame brat." On this subject he was from the first highly sensitive. When some woman alluded to it in his hearing, while he was in his nurse's arms, he cut at her with a little whip, crying, "Dinna speak of it!" And this defect helped to embitter his after life. On the death of the "wicked lord," he succeeded to the title (May 1790), and then Mrs. Byron moved to Newstead, but she was too poor to live there, and the estate was put into Chancery, Lord Carlisle, the boy's uncle, being appointed his guardian. At Harrow he did little school work, and was chiefly

distinguished for his strong friendships, and love of a "row." He was foremost in a revolt of the boys against Dr. Butler, though of the former master, Dr. Drury, he was very fond. Still there lurked the contemplative element in him there, for he would lie for hours under a favourite elm in the churchyard upon a tombstone, looking at the view. And he did a considerable amount of private reading, too. His boyish attachments almost amounted to passions. He displayed, too, the utmost generosity as a boy, offering to take half of the punishment which a big bully was inflicting upon his friend, the future Sir Robert Peel.

In the summer of 1803 the boy spent his holidays with his mother at Nottingham, and now occurred the first serious love-affair of his amorous life. Lord Grey, tenant under Chancery of Newstead, placed a room in the Abbey at his disposal, and on a visit to Annesley, which was near, he met, and became passionately attached to his cousin, Mary Chaworth; but she remained irresponsive. One day he overheard her saying to her maid, "Do you think I could care for that lame boy?" He was two years younger than she, and not so prepossessing as later—a shy, awkward boy. They met again on the hill at Annesley a year after, and this interview stands recorded in "The Dream." Mary was unhappily married to another cousin, Mr. Masters, and died out of her mind. It was also in one of these Harrow holidays that he first learned to know and love his half-sister Augusta, a woman admirable in all the relations of life, and the most ennobling influence of his life.

In October 1805 the young man went to Cam-

bridge, remaining during three years of irregular attendance, and taking his (honorary) Master's Degree in March 1808. In November 1806 he first printed, for private circulation, his juvenile poems, and in March 1807 published the "Hours of Idleness." In 1808 he led a dissipated life in London, and *more suo*, trumpeted the dissipations abroad which most young men say nothing about. But, like Rousseau, he turned everything in his own experience, into so much material for art. His reputation for evil living is derived almost entirely from his own admissions and wanton exaggeration. For he wished to make people stare, at any price, and would throw out mysterious hints of his unspeakably wicked behaviour; so that good Lady Byron, and other good people, unable to see through his mystifications, gave him full credit for being as bad as he pretended—nay, even worse. That this foolish habit, together with uncommon warmth of temperament, which somewhat obliterated the usually sharp and recognised distinctions between affection and passion, was the main foundation of the scandalous stories, which his wife believed, and privately circulated to his discredit, seems very probable. But there is no doubt that, as he affirms of himself, his "blood was all meridian," and his temperament volcanic.

The "Hours of Idleness" were poorish and pretentious verses, certainly with less of promise in them than the first productions of most other great poets. Yet they had some, and there was little excuse for the smart but stupid *Edinburgh Review* article upon them. However, this had the good effect of rousing Byron to put forth his

power, and his second effort, "The English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," was very superior to the first, though still not showing much originality, and very unfair. In these Popean verses he hit viciously all round. The poet took his seat in the House of Lords March 1809, and a few days later his satire appeared. Before going abroad with Hobhouse, he entertained a few friends at Newstead, keeping there a wolf and a bear; using as a drinking cup the skull of an old monk, dug up in the grounds, which was polished and set in silver for the purpose, and playing the fool in other ways. The poet remained always more or less of a grown-up schoolboy, alternating hilarity and practical jokes with melancholy and gloom. On July 2nd he sailed from Falmouth for Lisbon, with Hobhouse, and remained away for two years. The latter wrote a prose account of the journey, and furnished notes for "Childe Harold," the two first cantos of which were written.

Byron set sail for England on the 3rd June, 1811. On arrival, he found his affairs much embarrassed, and his mother died at Newstead, where he had made sedulous arrangements for her comfort, before he could get down there to see her. Soon after he made his speech in the House of Lords in favour of the poor Nottingham frame-breakers. Two days later Cantos I. and II. of "Childe Harold" were published (February 1813). The result was, in his own words, that he woke one morning, and found himself famous. The success, so far as popularity can make it, was unparalleled, and he became the lion of the hour. Then came the "Tales" in succession, from 1813-16, the "Corsair," "The Giaour,"

"Bride of Abydos," "Lara," a continuation of the "Corsair," "Parisina," the "Siege of Corinth." The "Hebrew Melodies," among which are some of Byron's best lyrics, also belong to these years. But the tide of his popularity was on the turn.

His domestic difficulties, together with the scandalous stories to which they gave rise, brought him to the *nadir* of his ill-fortune, finally driving him into exile. In January 1815, he married Anna Isabella, daughter of Sir Ralph Millbanke, baronet, and of Judith Noel, daughter of Lord Wentworth. In the few first months the poet's correspondence shows that the pair were very happy; nor was it a mere *mariage de convenance.* But a fatal incompatibility of temper and disposition soon showed itself. She was a spoilt child, who piqued herself on virtue, and he another, who piqued himself on vice. She was a really excellent woman, upright, philanthropic, and clever, but cold and precise, as well as conventional and rigid in her propriety, and respect for her own dignity. She had hoped to reform her husband, but found that he would go his own way, not conform to hers. Moreover, he seems to have been positively unkind and unchivalrous in his behavour towards her at a time when her delicate situation should have made him particularly tender. But he was suffering from serious illness and worry, and was half mad at this time. Yet it was rather the constant hourly disagreements that arose between two persons of opposite natures, and strong, unyielding wills, which led to the rupture; his ungovernably sensuous, hysterically nervous, and high-strung temperament being evidently repulsive to her, so that she even came to believe him

guilty of misconduct of which there is no sufficient evidence to convict him; and she told people in her confidence stories to this effect, though she did not bring them publicly forward. Believing her husband to be mad, she left London, where they were residing, after the birth of Augusta Ada (who became Lady Lovelace) and retired to the house of her father. But she left in the house Augusta, the poet's sister (then married to Colonel Leigh), who had been staying with them, expressing the utmost confidence in her judicious kindness, and gratitude for the affectionate attention which Augusta had shown her all through this trying time. She likewise continued on the most friendly terms with Augusta Leigh long after Byron's death. Lady Byron now sent her mother, Lady Noel (the Milbankes took Lord Wentworth's family name, Noel, upon his death), together with a certain *confidante*, Mrs. Clermont—subject of "The Sketch"—to consult a lawyer and a doctor in London; one of the supposed proofs of her husband's madness supplied by the wife being that he had gone into hysterics on seeing Kean act Sir Giles Overreach, and had thrown a valuable watch into the fire when the house was invaded by bailiffs—as it often was. But these gentlemen pronounced that Byron was not mad, upon which his wife made her father write, announcing that she would not return to him. The worst stories had got about, and the poet was virtually driven, by the force of general execration, from England.

Byron sailed from Dover to Ostend in April 1816, with a young Italian doctor, Polidori, never to return to England alive. He travelled in a cum-

brous carriage through Flanders and the Rhine to Switzerland, gathering materials for the third canto of "Childe Harold." Before leaving England he had formed a *liaison*, with Claire Clairmont, daughter of William Godwin, a step-sister to Mary Shelley. She travelled to Geneva with Shelley and Mary, and Byron met her again there. Their daughter Allegra was born when Claire returned to England in 1817. At Geneva Byron first met Shelley, a warm friendship resulting, though Byron admired Shelley's character more than Shelley admired Byron's. There was a taint of worldliness, of what Goethe called *empeiria*, about Byron, and he had not quite shaken off the graveclothes of the polite society he still half admired. But I must say that his character, while inferior in some respects, was probably superior in others to that of Shelley. The two poets had villas on the lake near to one another, and enjoyed much pleasant intercourse. They made the tour of the lake together, and were nearly wrecked, like the Julie and St. Preux of Rousseau, off the rocks of Meillerie, both poets showing courage and generosity. The influence of Shelley on Byron was probably good; it may be felt in the subtler and more ethereal poetry he produced at this time. When Shelley left, Byron made an excursion through the Oberland with Hobhouse, gathering material for "Manfred." He now wrote the "Prisoner of Chillon," part of "Manfred," the third canto of "Childe Harold," "Prometheus," the stanzas to "Augusta," the "Dream," and, urged by Madame de Staël, made overtures to his wife for a reconciliation; but she was obdurate. The gloom and remorse, half affected in the earlier verse, were deepened, intensified, and

real enough in "Manfred," where passionate love is painted with great force. Grand also is the mountain poetry. In October, Byron set out with Hobhouse for Italy, and arrived by the *Simplon* at Venice, where he plunged into a life of vulgar debauchery. This, no doubt, was partly from recklessness and despair, to drown thought and memory. He also drank too freely, and dieted himself in a most injudicious manner, so that his digestion became a torture to him, and he was brought very near to death's door. The little Allegra had been sent to her father at Venice, but feeling that his abode there was no place for her, he placed her first under the care of Mrs. Hoppner, wife of the British Consul at Venice, and then in a convent at Bagna Cavallo, where she soon afterwards died of fever. Byron was almost inconsolable when she died. She was buried near his favourite elm tree in Harrow churchyard.

After visiting Ferrara, where he wrote the "Lament of Tasso," and Rome, where he sat for his bust to Thorwaldsen, and gathered materials for the fourth canto of "Childe Harold" (published 1818), the poet established himself at the villa of La Mira on the Brenta. Later he moved to the Palazzo Mocenigo on the Grand Canal, and here he wrote "Beppo," "Mazeppa," and the early books of "Don Juan." "Beppo" is an admirable, though slight, semi-satirical, humorous sketch in a new vein—the vein of "Don Juan." Shelley, with Mary and Claire, took up his abode in a villa Byron lent him, and the two poets rode frequently on the Lido together. His gondoliers called Byron "the English fish," from his passionate fondness for swimming. Tom Moore also

visited Byron, and it was now that he gave Moore the autobiography to publish after his death. This contained his version of the domestic differences. But, with the consent of Lord and Lady Byron's friends, and Murray's, to whom Moore had sold it, this was, after the poet's death, destroyed. Consul-General Hoppner bears warm testimony to his pecuniary generosity towards persons in distress at this time, many of his benefactions being done in secret; and so does Shelley. His kindness to his servants amounted almost to over-indulgence, and they were much attached to him.

In April 1819 Byron was introduced to the Contessa Theresa Guiccioli, a beautiful blonde, daughter of Count Gamba, and married by her parents at the age of sixteen to a rich widower of sixty, for whom she did not care. The poet and she fell in love with one another, and she swayed his affections up to the time of his death. When the Count and Theresa left for Ravenna, she wrote to her lover entreating him to follow her, which he did. He rode in the pine forest at Ravenna, and wrote the "Prophecy of Dante," one of his grandest poems, breathing the very spirit of the lonely exile who had found a refuge here. But the "Terza Rima" is not successful. His beneficence to the poor was great, and they covered him with blessings when he left to join the Guiccioli at Bologna. In a violent altercation he had with an Italian officer, who had sold him an unsound horse, and in its after effects, we see one sometimes on the verge of madness. He dreaded madness himself; and the spirits he took made him worse. Shelley says that this serious affair of the heart was one

which proved highly for his benefit, since it reclaimed him from his merely sensual excesses; and, if we may judge from the Guicciolis' book, he ever turned the best side of his nature to her. She soon left Bologna openly in the company of her lover, and lived with him at La Mira. But on Byron's refusing to lend the Count money, the latter came and fetched Theresa away with him, and Byron thought seriously of returning to England. Yet, being invited by the lady's relations, he went to Ravenna, and took up his abode, by special invitation, in the Palazzo Guiccioli. The Count and Countess were soon afterwards divorced. Byron now joined in the conspiracy of the Carbonari, the republican Italian party, against Austrian rule, and made the Palazzo into a kind of fortress, where the patriots could meet, and arms were kept stored in case of need. There is no doubt that he acted from mixed motives. He liked a quarrel; he liked to lead, and to produce an effect; but his sympathies for the oppressed were genuine and ardent; his conduct in Greece proved that he could make great sacrifices for a noble cause which he had at heart; and he became more and more capable of merging himself in devotion to human welfare. At Ravenna he wrote his dramas "Cain," the "Two Foscari," "Marino Faliero," "Sardanapalus," and, a little later, "Werner," and "Deformed Transformed." The revolutionary movement came to nothing, and the Gambas, with La Guiccioli, were banished from the Romagna. The Gambas went to Pisa, and Byron followed them, living in the Palazzo Lanfranchi, on the Lung' Arno. The publication of "Cain" caused a great outcry in England; it was thought blasphemous and outrageous, so that Murray

was threatened with prosecution; and "The Vision of Judgment" was published in *The Liberal*, a journal conducted by Byron, in concert with Leigh Hunt. "Heaven and Earth" was written October 1821, and is one of the poet's finer works. "The Vision of Judgment" is a satire directed partly against Southey, who was a pet aversion of Byron's, and partly against the Laureate's idealisation of domestic virtue and public vice, in the person of George III. Hunt's joint venture with Byron, *The Liberal*, was very unfortunate, and had a short life. In July 1822, Shelley was drowned in the Gulf of Spezzia while Byron was at Pisa, and the body being recovered, was burned on the shore, in the presence of Byron, Leigh Hunt, and Trelawny,—a very remarkable man who had joined the party, and afterwards wrote reminiscences of the two poets. In July the Gambas were banished from Tuscany, and Byron went to Genoa with Theresa. The last cantos of "Don Juan" were now finished, and "The Island" was written, which has a good deal of quiet, idyllic beauty.

To the poet, long interested in the Greek War of Independence against Turkey, a committee, formed in England to help forward the cause, now proposed that he should proceed to Greece himself, and render active assistance. After some hesitation he agreed, and urged a loan upon the English, offering good security. A great proportion of his own fortune he devoted to the Greek cause, and embarked on board the *Hercules* at Genoa, with Trelawny, Gamba, and others, July 14th. At Cephalonia he waited for some time, to see how and where his services could be most effectively rendered. The national party

was rent by factions, and he negotiated with the leaders in order to bring about more union and concentration of their resources. After some vacillations, and a delay which was deliberate, Prince Mavrocordato, one of the principal leaders of the movement, persuaded him to come to Mesolonghi, which he had himself relieved with a Greek fleet. Colonel the Hon. L. Stanhope was also there to meet him. He had a narrow escape of capture by the Turks, and shipwreck by the way, but landed on the 5th, being received with enthusiasm, and almost royal honours. But he had been night and day in wet clothes, and his enfeebled constitution never recovered this shock. He surrounded himself with a body-guard of five hundred Suliotes, rough soldiers who had fought under Bozzaris; and all the Suliotes present were put under his command, he being elected to lead the coming assault on Lepanto. But these men were turbulent and lawless, and gave him no end of trouble. After being guilty of many acts of violence, they at last flatly refused to march against stone walls, and the projected siege had to be abandoned. Byron's counsels were always for moderation and prudence, and he showed much practical wisdom at this trying time. He likewise did all he could to mitigate the necessary severities of war. Anxiety and worry broke him down. He was attacked by epilepsy, and finally by rheumatic fever, from which he had no strength to rally. Surrounded by poor doctors, who adopted a mistaken system of treatment, he had no woman to nurse him, only kind male attendants, who wished him well, and sincerely loved him, but were powerless to save his life. He had been invited to a congress, which

was to be held at Salona, where he would have been offered the crown of Greece; nor is it certain that he would have declined it. But he was on his death-bed when the congress was held. While he lay there, the mutinous Suliotes rushed into the room, making all sorts of impossible demands. His conduct on the occasion is said by all to have been admirable for dignity and coolness. He quelled them by sheer force of character. Byron had been repeatedly urged by his friends to quit Mesolonghi—at any rate, for a time—for the restoration of his health. But he thought this would have a bad effect, and look like shirking the duty he had undertaken. He said to one, that so noble a cause was worth a million such lives as his. He tried in vain, when he knew that he was dying, to give some final instructions to his valet, Fletcher, in which only the names of his wife, sister, and daughter were intelligible. "Go to Lady Byron, and tell her," he gasped; but Fletcher could not understand what he said; which agitated him sadly. In his delirium he fancied that he was leading the assault on Lepanto, and called out "Forwards! forwards! courage! follow my example! don't be afraid!" About six o'clock on the evening of the 18th April, he murmured, "Now I shall go to sleep," and these were his last words. After lying another four-and-twenty hours unconscious, he opened his eyes, and at a quarter past six on the evening of the 19th, during a terrible thunderstorm, died. When Trelawny arrived, he found in the room where Byron lay dead an unfinished letter to Augusta—concerning a communication which his sister had transmitted to him from his wife regarding Ada—a miniature of her, which also Lady Byron

had sent, and a handkerchief with cypher worked in a woman's hair, stained with his own blood. Mavrocordato ordered thirty-seven shots, one for each year of the poet's life, to be fired from the battery, and he received princely honours at the funeral procession, multitudes coming to look at the embalmed remains of the liberator. The Greeks desired that he should be buried in the temple of Theseus, at Athens; but Stanhope took the body home to England for sepulture in the National Abbey. The Dean, however, refused to pay this last honour to our great singer, and he was buried, by his sister's desire, in the family vault near Newstead, the common people crowding to attend the funeral of their illustrious friend.

RODEN NOEL.

PERSONAL POEMS.

1808.

LORD BYRON.

I.—WHEN WE TWO PARTED.

WHEN we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well:—
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—
  In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
  Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
  After long years,
How should I greet thee ?—
  With silence and tears.

II.—WELL! THOU ART HAPPY.

1808.

WELL! thou art happy, and I feel
  That I should thus be happy too;
For still my heart regards thy weal
  Warmly, as it was wont to do.

Thy husband's blest—and 'twill impart
  Some pangs to view his happier lot:
But let them pass—Oh! how my heart
  Would hate him if he loved thee not!

When late I saw thy favourite child,
  I thought my jealous heart would break;
But when th' unconscious infant smiled,
  I kiss'd it for its mother's sake.

I kiss'd it, and repress'd my sighs
  Its father in its face to see;
But then it had its mother's eyes,
  And they were all to love and me.

Mary, adieu! I must away:
  While thou art blest I'll not repine;
But near thee I can never stay;
  My heart would soon again be thine.

I deem'd that time, I deem'd that pride
Had quench'd at length my boyish flame;
Nor knew till seated by thy side,
My heart in all, save hope, the same.

Yet was I calm: I knew the time
My breast would thrill before thy look;
But now to tremble were a crime—
We met, and not a nerve was shook.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,
Yet meet with no confusion there:
One only feeling could'st thou trace;
The sullen calmness of despair.

Away! away! my early dream
Remembrance never must awake:
Oh! where is Lethe's fabled stream?
My foolish heart be still, or break.

III.—EUTHANASIA.

WHEN Time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
Oblivion! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying bed!

No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep, or wish, the coming blow:
No maiden, with dishevell'd hair,
To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

But silent let me sink to Earth,
With no officious mourners near:
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a fear.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

'Twere sweet, my Psyche! to the last
Thy features still serene to see:
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

But vain the wish—for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath;
And woman's tears, produced at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan!
For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.

"Ay, but to die, and go," alas!
Where all have gone, and all must go!
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe!

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be.

IV.—AND THOU ART DEAD.

February 1812.

"Heu, quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse!"

AND thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon return'd to Earth!
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not:
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
Like common earth can rot;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'Tis Nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last
As fervently as thou,
Who didst not change through all the past,
And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow:
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours;
  The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
  Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep;
  Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have pass'd away;
I might have watch'd through long decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
  Must fall the earliest prey;
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
  The leaves must drop away:
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
  Than see it pluck'd to-day;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
  To see thy beauties fade;
The night that followed such a morn
  Had worn a deeper shade:
Thy day without a cloud hath pass'd,
And thou wert lovely to the last;
  Extinguish'd, not decay'd;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
  My tears might well be shed,
To think I was not near to keep
  One vigil o'er thy bed;
To gaze, how fondly! on thy face,

To fold thee in a faint embrace,
  Uphold thy drooping head;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
  Though thou hast left me free,
The loveliest things that still remain,
  Than thus remember thee!
The all of thine that cannot die
Through dark and dread Eternity,
  Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught, except its living years.

V.—FARE THEE WELL.

March 17, 1816.

FARE thee well! and if for ever,
  Still for ever, fare thee well:
Even though unforgiving, never
  'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee
  Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
  Which thou ne'er canst known again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
  Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou wouldst at last discover
  'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe—

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away:

Still thine own its life retaineth—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widow'd bed.

And when thou would'st solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"
Though his care she must forego?

When her little hand shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is press'd,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had bless'd!

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 'tis done—all words are idle—
Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.—

Fare thee well!—thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted—
More than this I scarce can die.

VI.—STANZAS TO AUGUSTA.

July 24, 1816.

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling,
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake;
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one;
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'Twas folly not sooner to shun:
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all:
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

VII.—THE DREAM.

July, 1816.

I.

OUR life is twofold; Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality:
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity;
They pass like spirits of the past,—they speak
Like sibyls of the future; they have power—
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;
They make us what we were not—what they will,
And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
The dread of vanish'd shadows—Are they so?

Is not the past all shadow ?—What are they ?
Creations of the mind ?—The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.
I would recall a vision which I dream'd
Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green, and of mild declivity, the last
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of men
Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Arising from such rustic roofs ;—the hill
Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man :
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
Gazing—the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her ;
And both were young, and one was beautiful :
And both were young—yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
The maid was on the eve of womanhood ;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him ; he had look'd

Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, no being, but in hers;
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words; she was his sight,
For his eye follow'd hers, and saw with hers,
Which colour'd all his objects:—he had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of hers, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share:
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother—but no more; 'twas much,
For brotherless she was, save in the name
Her infant friendship had bestow'd on him;
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honour'd race.—It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not—and why?
Time taught him a deep answer—when she loved
Another; even *now* she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
There was an ancient mansion, and before
Its walls there was a steed caparison'd:
Within an antique Oratory stood
The Boy of whom I spake;—he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro: anon
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced

Words which I could not guess of; then he lean'd
His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 'twere
With a convulsion—then arose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet: as he paused,
The Lady of his love re-enter'd there;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet
She knew she was by him beloved,—she knew,
For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart
Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand; a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded, as it came;
He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,
For they did part with mutual smiles; he pass'd
From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way;
And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more.

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood; in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his soul drank their sunbeams: he was girt
With strange and dusky aspect; he was not
Himself like what he had been; on the sea
And on the shore he was a wanderer;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all; and in the last he lay

Reposing from the noon-tide sultriness,
Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them; by his sleeping side
Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fasten'd near a fountain; and a man,
Clad in a flowing garb, did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumber'd around:
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in Heaven.

v.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The lady of his love was wed with One
Who did not love her better:—in her home,
A thousand leagues from his,—her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy,
Daughters and sons of Beauty,—but behold!
Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.
What could her grief be?—she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be?—she had loved him not,
Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,
Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
Upon her mind—a spectre of the past.

vi.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was return'd.—I saw him stand

Before an Altar—with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The starlight of his Boyhood;—as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then—
As in that hour—a moment o'er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced,—and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reel'd around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall,
And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her who was his destiny, came back
And thrust themselves between him and the light:
What business had they there at such a time?

VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love;—Oh! she was changed
As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes,
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things;
And forms impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight familiar were to hers.
And this the world calls frenzy; but the wise

Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
What is it but the telescope of truth?
Which strips the distance of its fantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real!

VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compass'd round
With Hatred and Contention; Pain was mix'd
In all which was served up to him, until
Like to the Pontic monarch of old days,
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
But were a kind of nutriment; he lived
Through that which had been death to many men,
And made him friends of mountains: with the stars
And the quick Spirit of the Universe
He held his dialogues; and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries;
To him the book of Night was open'd wide,
And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd
A marvel and a secret—Be it so.

IX.

My dream was past; it had no further change.
It was of a strange order, that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
Almost like a reality—the one
To end in madness—both in misery.

VIII.—TO THOMAS MOORE.

MY boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea;
But, before I go, Tom Moore,
Here's a double health to thee!

Here's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate;
And, whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the ocean roar around me,
Yet it still shall bear me on:
Though a desert should surround me,
It hath springs that may be won.

Were't the last drop in the well,
As I gasped upon the brink,
Ere my fainting spirit fell,
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water, as this wine,
The libation I would pour
Should be—Peace with thine and mine,
And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

IX.—ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR.

MISSOLONGHI, *Jan.* 22, 1824.

'TIS time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move;
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile!

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood!—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

If thou regret'st thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honourable death
Is here:—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath!

Seek out—less often sought than found—
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

LORD BYRON.

I.—MAID OF ATHENS, ERE WE PART.

1810.

Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

MAID of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go,
Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

By those tresses unconfined,
Woo'd by each Ægean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone;
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol,
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

II.—THERE BE NONE OF BEAUTY'S DAUGHTERS.

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming:

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

III.—THERE'S NOT A JOY THE WORLD CAN GIVE.

1815.

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess :
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes down ;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own ;
That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope of rest ;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruined turret wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and grey beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many a vanish'd scene ;
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brackish though they be,
So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would flow to me.

IV.—*THEY SAY THAT HOPE IS HAPPINESS.*

THEY say that Hope is happiness;
But genuine Love must prize the past
And Memory wakes the thoughts that bless;
They rose the first—they set the last;

And all that Memory loves the most
Was once our only Hope to be,
And all that Hope adored and lost
Hath melted into Memory.

Alas! it is delusion all:
The future cheats us from afar,
Nor can we be what we recall,
Nor dare we think on what we are.

V.—SO, WE'LL GO NO MORE A ROVING.

1817.

SO, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

HEBREW MELODIES.

1813—1815.

LORD BYRON.

I.—SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

SHE walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

II.—THE WILD GAZELLE.

THE wild gazelle on Judah's hills
Exulting yet may bound,
And drink from all the living rills
That gush on holy ground;
Its airy step and glorious eye
May glance in tameless transport by:—

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
Hath Judah witness'd there;
And o'er her scenes of lost delight
Inhabitants more fair.
The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's statelier maids are gone!

More blest each palm that shades those plains
Than Israel's scatter'd race;
For taking root, it there remains
In solitary grace:
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

But we must wander witheringly,
In other lands to die;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
Our own may never lie:
Our temple hath not left a stone,
And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

III.—OH! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM.

Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead!

Away! we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

IV.—I SAW THEE WEEP.

I saw thee weep—the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue;
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew:
I saw thee smile—the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine;
It could not match the living rays
That fill'd that glance of thine.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and mellow dye,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve
Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

V.—THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

PROMETHEUS.

1816.

LORD BYRON.

I.

TITAN! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense?
A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

II.

Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die:
The wretched gift Eternity
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;

The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

III.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To Mortals of their fate and force;
Like thee, Man is in part divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself—and equal to all woes,
And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concentr'd recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

1809—1817.

LORD BYRON.

I.

TO INEZ.

(Canto I., Stanza 84).

Nay, smile not at my sullen brow;
  Alas! I cannot smile again:
Yet Heaven avert that ever thou
  Shouldst weep, and haply weep in vain.

And dost thou ask what secret woe
  I bear, corroding joy and youth?
And wilt thou vainly seek to know
  A pang, ev'n thou must fail to soothe?

It is not love, it is not hate,
  Nor low Ambition's honours lost,
That bids me loathe my present state,
  And fly from all I prized the most:

It is that weariness which springs
  From all I meet, or hear, or see:
To me no pleasure Beauty brings;
  Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me.

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom
  The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore;
That will not look beyond the tomb,
  But cannot hope for rest before.

What Exile from himself can flee?
To zones, though more and more remote,
Still, still pursues, where'er I be,
The blight of life—the demon Thought.

Yet others rapt in pleasure seem,
And taste of all that I forsake;
Oh! may they still of transport dream,
And ne'er, at least like me, awake!

Through many a clime 'tis mine to go,
With many a retrospection curst;
And all my solace is to know,
Whate'er betides, I've known the worst.

What is that worst? Nay, do not ask—
In pity from the search forbear:
Smile on—nor venture to unmask
Man's heart, and view the Hell that's there.

II.

ON THE PLAIN OF MARATHON.

(Canto II., Stanzas 88—92.)

(LXXXVIII.)

WHERE'ER we tread, 'tis haunted, holy ground;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
And all the Muses' tales seem truly told,
Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon:
Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
Defies the power which crush'd thy temples gone:
Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.

(LXXXIX.)

The sun, the soil, but not the slave, the same;
Unchanged in all except its foreign lord,
Preserves alike its bounds and boundless fame
The Battle-field, where Persia's victim horde
First bow'd beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword,
As on the morn to distant Glory dear,
When Marathon became a magic word;
Which utter'd, to the hearer's eye appear
The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career,

(XC.)

The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow;
The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear;
Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain below;
Death in the front, Destruction in the rear!
Such was the scene—what now remaineth here?
What sacred trophy marks the hallow'd ground,
Recording Freedom's smile and Asia's tear?
The rifled urn, the violated mound,
The dust thy courser's hoof, rude stranger! spurns around.

(XCI.)

Yet to the remnants of thy splendour past
Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied throng;
Long shall the voyager, with th' Ionian blast,
Hail the bright clime of battle and of song;
Long shall thine annals and immortal tongue
Fill with thy fame the youth of many a shore;
Boast of the aged! lesson of the young!
Which sages venerate and bards adore,
As Pallas and the Muse unveil their awful lore.

(XCII.)

The parted bosom clings to wonted home,
If aught that's kindred cheer the welcome hearth;
He that is lonely, hither let him roam,
And gaze complacent on congenial earth.
Greece is no lightsome land of social mirth:
But he whom sadness sootheth may abide,
And scarce regret the region of his birth,
When wandering slow by Delphi's sacred side,
Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and Persian died.

III.

THE FIELD OF WATERLOO.

(Canto III., Stanzas 17, 21—28.)

(XVII.)

Stop!—for thy tread is on an Empire's dust!
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so,
As the ground was before, thus let it be;—
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
And is this all the world has gain'd by thee,
Thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory?

(XXI.)

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage-bell;—
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

(XXII.)

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But, hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

(XXIII.)

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell:
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

(XXIV.)

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If evermore should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise?

(xxv.)

And there was mounting in hot haste; the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! They come! they come!"

(xxvi.)

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" rose!
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!

(xxvii.)

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe,
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low!

(XXVIII.)

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
Battle's magnificently-stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

IV.

THE DRACHENFELS.

(Canto III., Stanza 55.)

I.

The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scatter'd cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strew'd a scene, which I should see
With double joy wert *thou* with me.

II.

And peasant girls, with deep-blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray,
And many a rock which steeply lours,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;
But one thing want these banks of Rhine —
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine!

III.

I send the lilies given to me;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must wither'd be,
But yet reject them not as such;
For I have cherish'd them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine!

IV.

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round;
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
Through life to dwell delighted here;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

V.

CALM AND STORM.

(Canto III., Stanzas 85—97.)

(LXXXV.)

CLEAR, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

(LXXXVI.)

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more;

(LXXXVII.)

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

(LXXXVIII.)

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a sta

(LXXXIX.)

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:—
All heaven and earth are still: From the high host
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
All is concenter'd in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

(XC.)

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
And purifies from self: it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things with beauty;—'twould disarm
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

(XCI.)

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer!

(XCII.)

The sky is changed!—and such a change! Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

(XCIII.)

And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

(XCIV.)

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;
Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage.

(XCV.)

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand :
For here, not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,
Flashing and cast around : of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd
His lightnings,—as if he did understand
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

(XCVI.)

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings ! ye !
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful ; the far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.
But where of ye, oh tempests ! is the goal ?
Are ye like those within the human breast ?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest ?

(XCVII.)

Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me,—could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into *one* word,
And that one word were Lightning, I would speak ;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

VI.

ROME.

(Canto IV., Stanzas 78, 79, and 138—145.)

(LXXVIII.)

Oh Rome! my country! city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye!
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

(LXXIX.)

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

(CXXXVIII.)

The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power!
Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here
Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear:
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene
Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear
That we become a part of what has been,
And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

(CXXXIX.)

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause,
As man was slaughter'd by his fellow-man.
And wherefore slaughter'd ? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not ?
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot ?
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

(CXL.)

I see before me the Gladiator lie :
He leans upon his hand--his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower ; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

(CXLI.)

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away ;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire,
And unavenged ?--Arise ! ye Goths, and glut your ire !

(CXLII.)

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain-stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
On the arena void—seats crush'd, walls bow'd—
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

(CXLIII.)

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd:
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all, years, man, have reft away.

(CXLIV.)

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

(CXLV.)

"While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;
And when Rome falls—the World." From our own land
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unalter'd all;
Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

VII.

THE OCEAN.

(Canto IV., Stanzas 178—184.)

(CLXXVIII.)

THERE is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

(CLXXIX.)

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

(CLXXX.)

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashes him again to earth:—there let him lay.

(CLXXXI.)

The armaments which thunder-strike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

(CLXXXII.)

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

(CLXXXIII.)

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convuls'd—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of Eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

(CLXXXIV.)

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

THE GIAOUR.

1813.

LORD BYRON.

GREECE.

FAIR clime! where every season smiles
Benignant o'er those blessed isles,
Which, seen from far Colonna's height,
Make glad the heart that hails the sight,
And lend to loneliness delight.
There mildly dimpling, Ocean's cheek
Reflects the tints of many a peak
Caught by the laughing tides that lave
These Edens of the eastern wave:
And if at times a transient breeze
Break the blue crystal of the seas,
Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
How welcome is each gentle air
That wakes and wafts the odours there!
For there—the Rose o'er crag or vale,
Sultana of the Nightingale,
The maid for whom His melody,
His thousand songs are heard on high,
Blooms blushing to her lover's tale:
His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,
Unbent by winds, unchill'd by snows,
Far from the winters of the west,
By every breeze and season blest,
Returns the sweets by nature given
In softest incense back to heaven;
And grateful yields that smiling sky
Her fairest hue and fragrant sign.
And many a summer flower is there,

And many a shade that love might share,
And many a grotto, meant for rest,
That holds the pirate for a guest;
Whose bark in sheltering cove below
Lurks for the passing peaceful prow
Till the gay mariner's guitar
Is heard, and seen the evening star;
Then stealing with the muffled oar
Far shaded by the rocky shore,
Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,
And turn to groans his roundelay.
Strange—that where Nature loved to trace,
As if for Gods, a dwelling-place,
And every charm and grace hath mix'd
Within the paradise she fix'd,
There man enamour'd of distress,
Should mar it into wilderness,
And trample, brute-like, o'er each flower
That tasks not one laborious hour;
Nor claims the culture of his hand
To bloom along the fairy land,
But springs as to preclude his care,
And sweetly woos him—but to spare!
Strange—that where all is peace beside
There passion riots in her pride,
And lust and rapine wildly reign
To darken o'er the fair domain.
It is as though the fiends prevail'd
Against the seraphs they assail'd,
And, fix'd on heavenly thrones, should dwell
The freed inheritors of hell;
So soft the scene, so form'd for joy,
So curst the tyrants that destroy!
He who hath bent him o'er the dead

Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress,
(Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers,)
And mark'd the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there,
The fix'd yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And—but for that sad shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now,
And but for that chill, changeless brow,
Where cold Obstruction's apathy
Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;
Yes, but for these and these alone,
Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,
He still might doubt the tyrant's power;
So fair, so calm, so softly seal'd,
The first, last look by death reveal'd!
Such is the aspect of this shore;
'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more!
So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start, for soul is wanting there.
Hers is the loveliness in death,
That parts not quite with parting breath;
But beauty with that fearful bloom,
That hue which haunts it to the tomb,
Expression's last receding ray,
A gilded halo hovering round decay,
The farewell beam of Feeling past away!
Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly birth,
Which gleams, but warms no more its cherish'd earth.

Clime of the unforgotten brave!
Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave!
Shrine of the mighty! can it be,
That this is all remains of thee?
Approach, thou craven crouching slave:
Say, is not this Thermopylæ?
These waters blue that round you lave,
Oh servile offspring of the free—
Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
The gulf, the rock of Salamis!
These scenes, their story not unknown,
Arise, and make again your own;
Snatch from the ashes of your sires
The embers of their former fires;
And he who in the strife expires
Will add to theirs a name of fear
That Tyranny shall quake to hear,
And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
They too will rather die than shame:
For Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeath'd by bleeding Sire to Son,
Though baffled oft, is ever won.
Bear witness, Greece, thy living page,
Attest it many a deathless age!
While kings, in dusty darkness hid,
Have left a nameless pyramid,
Thy heroes, though the general doom
Hath swept the column from their tomb,
A mightier monument command,
The mountains of their native land!
There points thy Muse to stranger's eye
The graves of those that cannot die!

THE CORSAIR.

1813—14.

LORD BYRON.

CONRAD AND MEDORA.

(From Canto I., Stanzas 14, 15.)

I.

THE DEPARTURE.

(XIV.)

"AGAIN—again—and oft again, my love!
If there be life below, and hope above,
He will return—but now the moments bring
The time of parting with redoubled wing:
The why—the where—what boots it now to tell?
Since all must end in that wild word—Farewell?
Yet would I fain—did time allow—disclose—
Fear not—these are no formidable foes;
And here shall watch a more than wonted guard,
For sudden siege and long defence prepared:
Nor be thou lonely—though thy lord's away,
Our matrons and thy handmaids with thee stay;
And this thy comfort—that when next we meet,
Security shall make repose more sweet.
List!—'tis the bugle"—Juan shrilly blew—
"One kiss—one more—another—Oh! Adieu!"

She rose, she sprung, she clung to his embrace,
Till his heart heaved beneath her hidden face.
He dared not raise to his that deep-blue eye,
Which downcast droop'd in tearless agony.
Her long fair hair lay floating o'er his arms,
In all the wildness of dishevell'd charms;

Scarce beat that bosom where his image dwelt
So full—*that* feeling seem'd almost unfelt!

Hark—peals the thunder of the signal-gun!
It told 'twas sunset—and he cursed that sun.
Again—again—that form he madly press'd,
Which mutely clasp'd, imploringly caress'd!
And tottering to the couch his bride he bore,
One moment gazed, as if to gaze no more;
Felt that for him earth held but her alone,
Kiss'd her cold forehead—turn'd—is Conrad gone?

(xv.)

"And is he gone?"—on sudden solitude
How oft that fearful question will intrude!
"'Twas but an instant past—and here he stood!
And now"—without the portal's porch she rush'd,
And then at length her tears in freedom gush'd:
Big—bright—and fast, unknown to her they fell;
But still her lips refused to send—"Farewell!"
For in that word—that fatal word—howe'er
We promise—hope—believe—there breathes despair.
O'er every feature of that still, pale face,
Had sorrow fix'd what time can ne'er erase:
The tender blue of that large loving eye
Grew frozen with its gaze on vacancy,
Till—Oh, how far!—it caught a glimpse of him,
And then it flow'd, and frenzied seem'd to swim,
Through those long, dark, and glistening lashes dew'd
With drops of sadness oft to be renew'd.
"He's gone!"—against her heart that hand is driven,
Convulsed and quick—then gently raised to heaven;
She looked and saw the heaving of the main;
The white sail set—she dared not look again;

But turn'd with sickening soul within the gate—
"It is no dream—and I am desolate!"

II.

THE RETURN.

(From Canto III., Stanzas 19—21.)

(XIX.)

The lights are high on beacon and from bower,
And 'midst them Conrad seeks Medora's tower:
He looks in vain—'tis strange—and all remark,
Amid so many, hers alone is dark.
'Tis strange—of yore its welcome never fail'd,
Nor now perchance extinguish'd, only veil'd.
With the first boat descends he for the shore,
And looks impatient on the lingering oar.
Oh! for a wing beyond the falcon's flight,
To bear him like an arrow to that height!
With the first pause the resting rowers gave,
He waits not—looks not—leaps into the wave,
Strives through the surge, bestrides the beach, and high
Ascends the path familiar to his eye.
He reach'd his turret door—he paused—no sound
Broke from within; and all was night around.
He knock'd, and loudly—footstep nor reply
Announced that any heard or deem'd him nigh;
He knock'd—but faintly—for his trembling hand
Refused to aid his heavy heart's demand.
The portal opens—'tis a well-known face—
But not the form he panted to embrace.
Its lips are silent—twice his own essay'd,
And fail'd to frame the question they delay'd:
He snatch'd the lamp—its light will answer all—
It quits his grasp, expiring in the fall.
He would not wait for that reviving ray—
As soon could he have linger'd there for day;

But, glimmering through the dusky corridore,
Another chequers o'er the shadow'd floor;
His steps the chamber gain—his eyes behold
All that his heart believed not—yet foretold!

(xx.)

He turn'd not—spoke not—sunk not—fix'd his look,
And set the anxious frame that lately shook:
He gazed—how long we gaze despite of pain,
And know, but dare not own, we gaze in vain!
In life itself she was so still and fair,
That death with gentler aspect wither'd there;
And the cold flowers her colder hand contain'd,
In that last grasp as tenderly were strain'd
As if she scarcely felt, but feign'd a sleep,
And made it almost mockery yet to weep:
The long dark lashes fringed her lids of snow,
And veil'd—thought shrinks from all that lurk'd below:
Oh! o'er the eye death most exerts his might,
And hurls the spirit from her throne of light!
Sinks those blue orbs in that long last eclipse,
But spares, as yet, the charm around her lips—
Yet, yet they seem as they forbore to smile,
And wish'd repose—but only for a while;
But the white shroud, and each extended tress,
Long—fair—but spread in utter lifelessness,
Which, late the sport of every summer wind,
Escaped the baffled wreath that strove to bind;
These—and the pale pure cheek, became the bier—
But she is nothing—wherefore is he here?

(xxi.)

He ask'd no question—all were answer'd now
By the first glance on that still-marble brow.
It was enough—she died—what reck'd it how?

THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.

1815—16.

LORD BYRON.

(Stanzas 22—24, 31—33.)

(XXII.)

THE night is past, and shines the sun
As if that morn were a jocund one.
Lightly and brightly breaks away
The Morning from her mantle gray,
And the Noon will look on a sultry day.
Hark to the trump, and the drum,
And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn,
And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,
And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum
And the clash and the shout, "They come, they come!"

* * * * *

(XXIII.)

As the wolves, that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,
Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die;
Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent;
Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,
Strew'd the earth like broken glass,
Shiver'd by the shot that tore
The ground whereon they moved no more:
Even as they fell, in files they lay,
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levell'd plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

(XXIV.)

As the spring-tides with heavy plash,
From the cliffs invading dash
Huge fragments, sapp'd by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreathed and worn,
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long and oft-renew'd
Charge of the Moslem multitude.
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heap'd, by the host of the infidel,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot:
Nothing there, save death, was mute:

* * * * *

(XXXI.)

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone
Contain'd the dead of ages gone;
Their names were on the graven floor,
But now illegible with gore;
The carvèd crests, and curious hues
The varied marble's veins diffuse,
Were smear'd, and slippery—stain'd, and strown
With broken swords, and helms o'erthrown:
There were dead above, and the dead below
Lay cold in many a coffin'd row;
You might see them piled in sable state,
By a pale light through a gloomy grate;
But War had enter'd their dark caves,
And stored along the vaulted graves
Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread
In masses by the fleshless dead:

Here throughout the siege, had been
The Christians' chiefest magazine;
To these a late-form'd train now led,
Minotti's last and stern resource
Against the foe's o'erwhelming force.

(XXXII.)

The foe came on, and few remain
To strive, and those must strive in vain:
For lack of further lives, to slake
The thirst of vengeance now awake,
With barbarous blows they gash the dead,
And lop the already lifeless head,
And fell the statues from their niche,
And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,
And from each other's rude hands wrest
The silver vessels saints had bless'd.
To the high altar on they go;
Oh, but it made a glorious show!
On its table still behold
The cup of consecrated gold;
Massy and deep, a glittering prize,
Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes:
That morn it held the holy wine,
Converted by Christ to his blood so divine,
Which his worshippers drank at the break of day,
To shrive their souls ere they join'd in the fray.
Still a few drops within it lay;
And round the sacred table glow
Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,
From the purest metal cast;
A spoil—the richest, and the last.

(XXXIII.)

So near they came, the nearest stretch'd
To grasp the spoil he almost reach'd,
When old Minotti's hand
Touch'd with the torch the train—
'Tis fired!
Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the slain,
The turban'd victors, the Christian band,
All that of living or dead remain,
Hurl'd on high with the shiver'd fane,
In one wild roar expired!

* * * * *

All the living things that heard
That deadly earth-shock disappear'd:
The wild birds flew, the wild dogs fled,
And howling left the unburied dead;
The camels from their keepers broke;
The distant steer forsook the yoke—
The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,
And burst his girth, and tore his rein;
The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh,
Deep-mouth'd arose, and doubly harsh;
The wolves yell'd on the cavern'd hill
Where echo roll'd in thunder still;
The jackal's troop, in gather'd cry,
Bay'd from afar complainingly,
With a mix'd and mournful sound,
Like crying babe, and beaten hound:
With sudden wing, and ruffled breast,
The eagle left his rocky nest,
And mounted nearer to the sun,
The clouds beneath him seem'd so dun;
Their smoke assail'd his startled beak,
And made him higher soar and shriek—
Thus was Corinth lost and won!

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.

1816.

LORD BYRON.

SONNET.

ETERNAL spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard!—May none those marks efface
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

(Stanzas 6—14.)

(VI.)

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
Which round about the wave enthralls:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made—and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay,

We heard it ripple night and day;
Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky;
And then the very rock hath rock'd,
And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

(VII.)

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunters' fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captives' tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow-men
Like brutes within an iron den:
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side;
But why delay the truth?—he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.

He died—and they unlock'd his chain,
And scoop'd for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begg'd them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his free-born breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laugh'd—and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

(VIII.)

But he, the favourite and the flower,
Most cherished since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was wither'd on the stalk away.
Oh God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood:—
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean

Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread:
But these were horrors—this was woe
Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray—
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence—lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
I listened, but I could not hear—
I call'd, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonishèd;
I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rush'd to him;—I found him not,
I only stirr'd in this black spot,
I only lived—*I* only drew
The accursèd breath of dungeon-dew;

The last—the sole—the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers—both had ceased to breathe:
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive—
A frantic feeling, when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.
I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope—but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

(IX.)

What next befell me then and there
I know not well—I never knew—
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too:
I had no thought, no feeling—none—
Among the stones I stood a stone,
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and gray,
It was not night—it was not day,
It was not even the dungeon-light
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness—without a place;
There were no stars—no earth—no time—
No check—no change—no good—no crime—

But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

(x.)

A light broke in upon my brain,—
  It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
  The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track,
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,
  And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
  And seem'd to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
It seem'd, like me, to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,
And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.

I know not if it late were free,
Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity,
Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in wingèd guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For—Heaven forgive that thought! the while
Which made me both to weep and smile;
I sometimes deem'd that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 'twas mortal—well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone,—
Lone—as the corse within its shroud,
Lone—as a solitary cloud,
A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue and earth is gay.

(XI.)

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate,
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was:—my broken chain
With links unfasten'd did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,

Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

(XII.)

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all,
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:
No child—no sire—no kin had I,
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barr'd windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

(XIII.)

I saw them—and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;

And then there was a little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seem'd no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seem'd joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seem'd to fly,
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,
And yet my glance, too much opprest,
Had almost need of such a rest.

(XIV.)

It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count—I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free,
I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where,

It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be,
I learn'd to love despair.
And thus when they appear'd at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I, the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell—
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are:—even I
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

DON JUAN.

1819.

LORD BYRON.

I.

JUAN AND HAIDÉE.

(From Canto II., Stanzas 109—118.)

Don Juan who has suffered shipwreck, swims to land, and is discovered by Haidée.

(CIX.)

WITH slow and staggering effort he arose,
But sunk again upon his bleeding knee
And quivering hand; and then he look'd for those
Who long had been his mates upon the sea;
But none of them appear'd to share his woes,
Save one, a corpse, from out the famish'd three,
Who died two days before, and now had found
An unknown barren beach for burial ground.

(CX.)

And as he gazed, his dizzy brain spun fast,
And down he sunk; and as he sunk, the sand
Swam round and round, and all his senses pass'd:
He fell upon his side, and his stretch'd hand
Droop'd dripping on the oar (their jury-mast),
And, like a wither'd lily, on the land
His slender frame and pallid aspect lay,
As fair a thing as e'er was form'd of clay.

(CXI.)

How long in his damp trance young Juan lay
He knew not, for the earth was gone for him,
And Time had nothing more of night nor day
For his congealing blood and senses dim;
And how this heavy faintness pass'd away
He knew not, till each painful pulse and limb,
And tingling vein, seem'd throbbing back to life,
For Death, though vanquish'd, still retired with strife.

(CXII.)

His eyes he open'd, shut, again unclosed,
For all was doubt and dizziness; he thought
He still was in the boat, and had but dozed,
And felt again with his despair o'erwrought,
And wish'd it death in which he had reposed;
And then once more his feelings back were brought,
And slowly by his swimming eyes was seen
A lovely female face of seventeen.

(CXIII.)

'Twas bending close o'er his, and the small mouth
Seem'd almost prying into his for breath;
And, chafing him, the soft warm hand of youth
Recall'd his answering spirits back from death;
And, bathing his chill temples, tried to soothe
Each pulse to animation, till, beneath
Its gentle touch and trembling care, a sigh
To these kind efforts made a low reply.

(CXIV.)

Then was the cordial pour'd, and mantle flung
Around his scarce-clad limbs; and the fair arm
Raised higher the faint head which o'er it hung;
And her transparent cheek, all pure and warm,
Pillow'd his death-like forehead; then she wrung
His dewy curls, long drench'd by every storm;
And watch'd with eagerness each throb that drew
A sigh from his heaved bosom—and hers too.

(CXV.)

And lifting him with care into the cave,
The gentle girl, and her attendant,—one
Young, yet her elder, and of brow less grave,
And more robust of figure—then begun

To kindle fire; and as the new flames gave
Light to the rocks that roof'd them, which the sun
Had never seen, the maid, or whatsoe'er
She was, appear'd distinct, and tall, and fair.

(CXVI.)

Her brow was overhung with coins of gold,
That sparkled o'er the auburn of her hair,
Her clustering hair, whose longer locks were roll'd
In braids behind; and though her stature were
Even of the highest for a female mould,
They nearly reach'd her heel; and in her air
There was a something which bespoke command,
As one who was a lady in the land.

(CXVII.)

Her hair, I said, was auburn; but her eyes
Were black as death, their lashes the same hue,
Of downcast length, in whose silk shadow lies
Deepest attraction; for when to the view
Forth from its raven fringe the full glance flies,
Ne'er with such force the swiftest arrow flew:
'Tis as the snake late coil'd, who pours his length,
And hurls at once his venom and his strength.

(CXVIII.)

Her brow was white and low, her cheek's pure dye
Like twilight rosy still with the set sun;
Short upper lip—sweet lips that make us sigh
Ever to have seen such; for she was one
Fit for the model of a statuary,
(A race of mere impostors, when all's done—
I've seen much finer women, ripe and real,
Than all the nonsense of their stone ideal).

II.

THE LOVERS.

(From Canto II., Stanzas 183 to 191, and 195 to 198.)

(CLXXXIII.)

It was the cooling hour, just when the rounded
Red sun sinks down behind the azure hill,
Which then seems as if the whole earth it bounded,
Circling all nature, hush'd and dim, and still,
With the far mountain-crescent half surrounded
On one side, and the deep sea calm and chill
Upon the other, and the rosy sky,
With one star sparkling through it like an eye.

(CLXXXIV.)

And thus they wander'd forth, and hand in hand,
Over the shining pebbles and the shells,
Glided along the smooth and harden'd sand,
And in the worn and wild receptacles
Work'd by the storms, yet work'd as it were plann'd,
In hollow halls, with sparry roofs and cells,
They turn'd to rest; and, each clasp'd by an arm,
Yielded to the deep twilight's purple charm.

(CLXXXV.)

They look'd up to the sky, whose floating glow
Spread like a rosy ocean, vast and bright;
They gazed upon the glittering sea below,
Whence the broad moon rose circling into sight;
They heard the waves splash, and the wind so low,
And saw each other's dark eyes darting light
Into each other—and, beholding this,
Their lips drew near, and clung into a kiss.

(CLXXXVI.)

A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth, and love,
And beauty, all concentrating like rays
Into one focus, kindled from above;
Such kisses as belong to early days,
Where heart, and soul, and sense, in concert move,
And the blood's lava, and the pulse a blaze,
Each kiss a heart-quake,—for a kiss's strength,
I think it must be reckon'd by its length.

(CLXXXVII.)

By length I mean duration; theirs endured
Heaven knows how long—no doubt they never reckon'd
And if they had, they could not have secured
The sum of their sensations to a second:
They had not spoken; but they felt allured,
As if their souls and lips each other beckon'd,
Which, being joined, like swarming bees they clung—
Their hearts the flowers from whence the honey sprung.

(CLXXXVIII.)

They were alone, but not alone as they
Who shut in chambers think it loneliness;
The silent ocean, and the starlight bay,
The twilight glow, which momently grew less,
The voiceless sands, and dropping caves, that lay
Around them, made them to each other press,
As if there were no life beneath the sky
Save theirs, and that their life could never die.

(CLXXXIX.)

They fear'd no eyes nor ears on that lone beach,
They felt no terrors from the night; they were
All in all to each other; though their speech
Was broken words, they *thought* a language there;—

And all the burning tongues the passions teach
Found in one sigh the best interpreter
Of nature's oracle—first love,—that all
Which Eve has left her daughters since her fall.

(cxc.)

Haidée spoke not of scruples, ask'd no vows,
Nor offer'd any; she had never heard
Of plight and promises to be a spouse,
Or perils by a loving maid incurr'd;
She was all which pure ignorance allows,
And flew to her young mate like a young bird;
And, never having dreamt of falsehood, she
Had not one word to say of constancy.

(cxci.)

She loved, and was beloved—she adored,
And she was worshipp'd; after nature's fashion,
Their intense souls, into each other pour'd,
If souls could die, had perish'd in that passion,—
But by degrees their senses were restored,
Again to be o'ercome, again to dash on;
And, beating 'gainst *his* bosom, Haidée's heart
Felt as if never more to beat apart.

(cxcv.)

And when those deep and burning moments pass'd,
And Juan sank to sleep within her arms,
She slept not, but all tenderly, though fast,
Sustain'd his head upon her bosom's charms;
And now and then her eye to heaven is cast,
And then on the pale cheek her breast now warms,
Pillow'd on her o'erflowing heart, which pants
With all it granted, and with all it grants.

(CXCVI.)

An infant when it gazes on the light,
A child the moment when it drains the breast,
A devotee when soars the Host in sight,
An Arab with a stranger for a guest,
A sailor when the prize has struck in fight,
A miser filling his most hoarded chest,
Feel rapture; but not such true joy are reaping,
As they who watch o'er what they love while sleeping.

(CXCVII.)

For there it lies so tranquil, so beloved,
All that it hath of life with us is living;
So gentle, stirless, helpless, and unmoved,
And all unconscious of the joy 'tis giving;
All it hath felt, inflicted, pass'd, and proved,
Hush'd into depths beyond the watcher's diving;
There lies the thing we love, with all its errors
And all its charms, like death without its terrors.

(CXCVIII.)

The lady watch'd her lover—and that hour
Of Love's, and Night's, and Ocean's solitude,
O'erflow'd her soul with their united power;
Amidst the barren sand and rocks so rude,
She and her wave-worn love had made their bower
Where nought upon their passion could intrude;
And all the stars that crowded the blue space,
Saw nothing happier than her glowing face.

III.

THE RETURN OF LAMBRO.

(Canto III., Stanzas 61—65, 67—78 and 86, Canto IV., Stanzas 10—15, 26—38, and 46—49.)

Lambro, Haidée's father, embarks on a piratical enterprise, and is absent so long that he is given up for lost. The lovers take possession of the house, and are holding revels when Lambro returns.

(LXI.)

Old Lambro pass'd unseen a private gate,
And stood within his hall at eventide:
Meantime, the lady and her lover sate
At wassail in their beauty and their pride;
An ivory inlaid table spread with state
Before them, and fair slaves on every side:
Gems, gold, and silver, form'd the service mostly,
Mother-of-pearl and coral the less costly.

(LXII.)

The dinner made about a hundred dishes;
Lamb and pistachio nuts—in short, all meats,
And saffron soups, and sweetbreads; and the fishes
Were of the finest that e'er flounced in nets,
Drest to a Sybarite's most pamper'd wishes:
The beverage was various sherbets
Of raisin, orange, and pomegranate juice,
Squeezed through the rind, which makes it best for use.

(LXIII.)

These were ranged round, each in its crystal ewer,
And fruits, and date-bread loaves closed the repast,
And Mocha's berry, from Arabia pure,
In small fine China cups, came in at last;

Gold cups of filigree, made to secure
The hand from burning, underneath them placed,
Cloves, cinnamon, and saffron, too, were boil'd
Up with the coffee, which (I think) they spoil'd.

(LXIV.)

The hangings of the room were tapestry, made
Of velvet panels, each of different hue,
And thick with damask flowers of silk inlaid;
And round them ran a yellow border too;
The upper border, richly wrought, display'd,
Embroider'd delicately o'er with blue,
Soft Persian sentences, in lilac letters,
From poets, or the moralists, their betters.

(LXV.)

These Oriental writings on the wall,
Quite common in those countries, are a kind
Of monitors adapted to recall,
Like skulls at Memphian banquets, to the mind
The words which shook Belshazzar in his hall,
And took his kingdom from him: you will find,
Though sages may pour out their wisdom's treasure,
There is no sterner moralist than Pleasure.

(LXVII.)

Haidée and Juan carpeted their feet
On crimson satin, border'd with pale blue;
Their sofa occupied three parts complete
Of the apartment—and appear'd quite new;
The velvet cushions (for a throne more meet)
Were scarlet, from whose glowing centre grew
A sun emboss'd in gold, whose rays of tissue,
Meridian-like, were seen all light to issue.

(LXVIII.)

Crystal and marble, plate and porcelain,
Had done their work of splendour; Indian mats
And Persian carpets, which the heart bled to stain,
Over the floors were spread; gazelles and cats,
And dwarfs and blacks, and such like things, that gain
Their bread as ministers and favourites—(that's
To say, by degradation)—mingled there
As plentiful as in a court, or fair.

(LXIX.)

There was no want of lofty mirrors, and
The tables, most of ebony inlaid
With mother-of-pearl or ivory, stood at hand,
Or were of tortoise-shell or rare woods made,
Fretted with gold or silver:—by command,
The greater part of these were ready spread
With viands and sherbets in ice—and wine—
Kept for all comers, at all hours to dine.

(LXX.)

Of all the dresses I select Haidée's:
She wore two jellicks—one was of pale yellow,
Of azure, pink, and white was her chemise—
'Neath which her breast heaved like a little billow;
With buttons form'd of pearls as large as peas,
All gold and crimson shone her jellick's fellow,
And the striped white gauze baracan that bound her,
Like fleecy clouds about the moon, flow'd round her.

(LXXI.)

One large gold bracelet clasp'd each lovely arm,
Lockless—so pliable from the pure gold,
That the hand stretch'd and shut it without harm,
The limb which it adorn'd its only mould;

So beautiful—its very shape would charm,
And clinging as if loth to lose its hold,
The purest ore enclosed the whitest skin
That e'er by precious metal was held in.

(LXXII.)

Around, as princess of her father's land,
A like gold bar above her instep roll'd,
Announced her rank; twelve rings were on her hand;
Her hair was starr'd with gems; her veil's fine fold
Below her breast was fasten'd with a band
Of lavish pearls, whose worth could scarce be told;
Her orange silk full Turkish trousers furl'd
About the prettiest ankle in the world.

(LXXIII.)

Her hair's long auburn waves down to her heel
Flow'd like an alpine torrent, which the sun
Dyes with his morning light,—and would conceal
Her person if allow'd at large to run;
And still they seem resentfully to feel
The silken fillet's curb, and sought to shun
Their bonds, whene'er some Zephyr, caught, began
To offer his young pinion as her fan.

(LXXIV.)

Round her she made an atmosphere of life,
The very air seem'd lighter from her eyes,
They were so soft and beautiful, and rife
With all we can imagine of the skies,
And pure as Psyche ere she grew a wife—
Too pure even for the purest human ties;
Her overpowering presence made you feel
It would not be idolatry to kneel.

(LXXV.)

Her eyelashes, though dark as night, were tinged
(It is the country's custom), but in vain;
For those large black eyes were so blackly fringed,
The glossy rebels mock'd the jetty stain,
And in their native beauty stood avenged:
Her nails were touch'd with henna; but again
The power of art was turn'd to nothing, for
They could not look more rosy than before.

(LXXVI.)

The henna should be deeply dyed to make
The skin relieved appear more fairly fair;
She had no need of this; day ne'er will break
On mountain-tops more heavenly white than her:
The eye might doubt if it were well awake,
She was so like a vision; I might err,
But Shakespeare also says, 'tis very silly,
"To gild refined gold, or paint the lily."

(LXXVII.)

Juan had on a shawl of black and gold,
But a white baracan, and so transparent,
The sparkling gems beneath you might behold,
Like small stars through the milky-way apparent;
His turban, furl'd in many a graceful fold,
An emerald aigrette, with Haidée's hair in't,
Surmounted, as its clasp, a glowing crescent,
Whose rays shone ever trembling, but incessant.

(LXXVIII.)

And now they were diverted by their suite,
Dwarfs, dancing girls, black eunuchs, and a poet,
Which made their new establishment complete;
The last was of great fame, and liked to show it;

His verses rarely wanted their due feet;
And for his theme—he seldom sung below it,
He being paid to satirize or flatter,
As the psalm says, "inditing a good matter."

(LXXXVI.)

In France, for instance, he would write a chanson;
In England, a six-canto quarto tale;
In Spain, he'd make a ballad or romance on
The last war—much the same in Portugal;
In Germany, the Pegasus he'd prance on
Would be old Goethe's—(see what says De Stael);
In Italy he'd ape the "Trecentisti;"
In Greece, he'd sing some sort of hymn like this t'ye:

The isles of Greece! the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,—
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse;
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."

The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea:
And musing there an hour alone,
I dream'd that Greece might still be free;
For, standing on the Persian's grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow
  Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
  And men in nations;—all were his!
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,
  My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now—
  The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
  Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
  Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest?
  Must *we* but blush?—Our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
  A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred grant but three
To make a new Thermopylæ!

What, silent still? and silent all?
  Ah! no: the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
  And answer, "Let one living head,
But one, arise—we come, we come!"
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain—in vain: strike other chords:
Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
Hark! rising to the ignoble call,
How answers each bold Bacchanal?

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet;
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus gave—
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these!
It made Anacreon's song divine:
He served—but serv'd Polycrates—
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!
Oh! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind!
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—
They have a king who buys and sells:
In native swords and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells;
But Turkish force and Latin fraud
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
I see their glorious black eyes shine;
But gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep:
There, swan-like, let me sing and die!
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

(Canto IV.)

(x.)

They were alone once more; for them to be
Thus was another Eden: they were never
Weary, unless when separate: the tree
Cut from its forest root of years—the river
Damm'd from its fountain—the child from the knee
And breast maternal wean'd at once for ever,—
Would wither less than these two torn apart;
Alas! there is no instinct like the heart—

(XI.)

The heart—which may be broken : happy they !
Thrice fortunate ! who of that fragile mould,
The precious porcelain of human clay,
Break with the first fall : they can ne'er behold
The long year link'd with heavy day on day,
And all which must be borne, and never told ;
While life's strange principle will often lie
Deepest in those who long the most to die.

(XII.)

" Whom the gods love, die young," was said of yore,
And many deaths do they escape by this :
The death of friends, and that which slays even more—
The death of friendship, love, youth, all that is,
Except mere breath ; and since the silent shore
Awaits at last even those who longest miss
The old archer's shafts, perhaps the early grave
Which men weep over, may be meant to save.

(XIII.)

Haidée and Juan thought not of the dead.
The heavens, and earth, and air, seem'd made for them :
They found no fault with Time, save that he fled ;
They saw not in themselves aught to condemn :
Each was the other's mirror, and but read
Joy sparkling in their dark eyes like a gem ;
And knew such brightness was but the reflection
Of their exchanging glances of affection.

(XIV.)

The gentle pressure, and the thrilling touch,
The least glance better understood than words,
Which still said all, and ne'er could say too much ;
A language, too, but like to that of birds,

Known but to them, at least appearing such
As but to lovers a true sense affords:
Sweet playful phrases, which would seem absurd
To those who have ceased to hear such, or ne'er heard.

(xv.)

All these were theirs, for they were children still,
And children still they should have ever been:
They were not made in the real world to fill
A busy character in the dull scene;
But like two beings born from out a rill,
A nymph and her beloved, all unseen
To pass their lives in fountains and on flowers,
And never know the weight of human hours.

(xxvi.)

Juan and Haidée gazed upon each other
With swimming looks of speechless tenderness,
Which mix'd all feelings, friend, child, lover, brother,
All that the best can mingle and express,
When two pure hearts are pour'd in one another,
And love too much, and yet can not love less;
But almost sanctify the sweet excess,
By the immortal wish and power to bless.

(xxvii.)

Mix'd in each other's arms, and heart in heart,
Why did they not then die?—they had lived too long,
Should an hour come to bid them breathe apart;
Years could but bring them cruel things or wrong;
The world was not for them, nor the world's art
For beings passionate as Sappho's song:
Love was born *with* them, *in* them, so intense,
It was their very spirit—not a sense.

(XXVIII.)

They should have lived together deep in woods,
Unseen as sings the nightingale; they were
Unfit to mix in these thick solitudes
Call'd social, haunts of Hate, and Vice, and Care:
How lonely every freeborn creature broods!
The sweetest song-birds nestle in a pair:
The eagle soars alone; the gull and crow
Flock o'er their carrion, just like men below.

(XXIX.)

Now pillow'd cheek to cheek, in loving sleep,
Haidée and Juan their siesta took,
A gentle slumber, but it was not deep;
For ever and anon a something shook
Juan, and shuddering o'er his frame would creep;
And Haidée's sweet lips murmur'd like a brook,
A wordless music, and her face so fair
Stirr'd with her dream, as rose-leaves with the air;

(XXX.)

Or as the stirring of a deep clear stream
Within an Alpine hollow, when the wind
Walks o'er it, was she shaken by the dream,
The mystical usurper of the mind—
O'erpowering us to be whate'er may seem
Good to the soul which we no more can bind;
Strange state of being! (for 'tis still to be)
Senseless to feel, and with seal'd eyes to see.

(XXXI.)

She dream'd of being alone on the sea-shore,
Chain'd to a rock; she knew not how, but stir
She could not from the spot, and the loud roar
Grew, and each wave rose roughly, threatening her;

And o'er her upper lip they seem'd to pour,
Until she sobb'd for breath, and soon they were
Foaming o'er her lone head, so fierce and high—
Each broke to drown her, yet she could not die.

(XXXII.)

Anon she was released, and then she stray'd
O'er the sharp shingles with her bleeding feet,
And stumbled almost every step she made:
And something roll'd before her in a sheet,
Which she must still pursue, howe'er afraid;
'Twas white and indistinct, nor stopp'd to meet
Her glance or grasp, for still she gazed, and grasp'd,
And ran, but it escaped her as she clasp'd.

(XXXIII.)

The dream chang'd:—in a cave she stood, its walls
Were hung with marble icicles, the work
Of ages on its water-fretted halls,
Where waves might wash, and seals might breed and lurk;
Her hair was dripping, and the very balls
Of her black eyes seem'd turn'd to tears, and murk
The sharp rocks look'd below each drop they caught,
Which froze to marble as it fell—she thought.

(XXXIV.)

And wet, and cold, and lifeless, at her feet,
Pale as the foam that froth'd on his dead brow,
Which she essay'd in vain to clear (how sweet
Were once her cares, how idle seem'd they now!)
Lay Juan, nor could aught renew the beat
Of his quench'd heart; and the sea-dirges low
Rang in her sad ears like a mermaid's song,
And that brief dream appear'd a life too long.

(XXXV.)

And gazing on the dead, she thought his face
Faded, or alter'd into something new—
Like to her father's features, till each trace
More like and like to Lambro's aspect grew—
With all his keen worn look and Grecian grace;
And starting, she awoke, and what to view?
O Powers of Heaven! what dark eye meets she there?
'Tis—'tis her father's—fix'd upon the pair!

(XXXVI.)

Then shrieking, she arose, and shrieking fell,
With joy and sorrow, hope and fear, to see,
Him whom she deem'd a habitant where dwell
The ocean-buried, risen from death, to be
Perchance the death of one she loved too well:
Dear as her father had been to Haidée,
It was a moment of that awful kind—
I have seen such—but must not call to mind.

(XXXVII.)

Up Juan sprang to Haidée's bitter shriek,
And caught her falling, and from off the wall
Snatch'd down his sabre, in hot haste to wreak
Vengeance on him who was the cause of all:
Then Lambro, who till now forbore to speak,
Smiled scornfully, and said, "Within my call,
A thousand scimitars await the word;
Put up, young man, put up your silly sword."

(XXXVIII.)

And Haidée clung around him; "Juan, 'tis—
'Tis Lambro—'tis my father! Kneel with me—
He will forgive us—yes—it must be—yes.
Oh! dearest father, in this agony

Of pleasure and of pain—even while I kiss
Thy garment's hem with transport, can it be
That doubt should mingle with my filial joy?
Deal with me as thou wilt, but spare this boy."

(XLVI.)

The father paused a moment, then withdrew
His weapon, and replaced it; but stood still,
And looking on her, as to look her through,
"Not *I*," he said, "have sought this stranger's ill;
Not *I* have made this desolation: few
Would bear such outrage, and forbear to kill;
But I must do my duty—how thou hast
Done thine, the present vouches for the past.

(XLVII.)

"Let him disarm; or, by my father's head,
His own shall roll before you, like a ball!"
He raised his whistle, as the word he said,
And blew, another answer'd to the call,
And, rushing in disorderly, though led,
And arm'd from boot to turban, one and all,
Some twenty of his train came, rank on rank;
He gave the word,—"Arrest or slay the Frank!"

(XLVIII.)

Then, with a sudden movement, he withdrew
His daughter; while compress'd within his clasp,
'Twixt her and Juan interposed the crew.
In vain she struggled in her father's grasp—
His arms were like a serpent's coil: then flew
Upon their prey, as darts an angry asp,
The file of pirates; save the foremost, who
Had fallen, with his right shoulder half cut through.

(XLIX.)

The second had his cheek laid open; but
The third, a wary, cool old sworder, took
The blows upon his cutlass, and then put
His own well in: so well, ere you could look,
His man was floor'd, and helpless at his foot,
With the blood running like a little brook
From two smart sabre gashes, deep and red—
One on the arm, the other on the head.

IV.

THE DEATH OF HAIDEE.

(From Canto IV., Stanzas 58 to 73.)

(LVIII.)

THE last sight which she saw was Juan's gore,
And he himself o'ermaster'd, and cut down;
His blood was running on the very floor,
Where late he trod, her beautiful, her own;
Thus much she view'd an instant, and no more—
Her struggles ceased with one convulsive groan;
On her sire's arm, which, until now, scarce held
Her, writhing, fell she, like a cedar fell'd.

(LIX.)

A vein had burst, and her sweet lips' pure dyes
Were dabbled with the deep blood which ran o'er;
And her head droop'd, as when the lily lies
O'ercharged with rain: her summon'd handmaids bore

Their lady to her couch, with gushing eyes.
Of herbs and cordials they produced their store;
But she defied all means they could employ,
Like one life could not hold, nor death destroy.

(LX.)

Days lay she in that state, unchanged, though chill—
With nothing livid, still her lips were red;
She had no pulse, but death seemed absent still;
No hideous sign proclaim'd her surely dead.
Corruption came not, in each mind to kill
All hope; to look upon her sweet face, bred
New thoughts of life, for it seem'd full of soul—
She had so much, earth could not claim the whole.

(LXI.)

The ruling passion, such as marble shows
When exquisitely chisell'd, still lay there,
But fix'd as marble's unchanged aspect throws
O'er the fair Venus, but for ever fair;
O'er the Laocoon's all eternal throes,
And ever-dying Gladiator's air,
Their energy, like life, forms all their fame,
Yet looks not life, for they are still the same.

(LXII.)

She woke at length, but not as sleepers wake,
Rather the dead, for life seem'd something new,
A strange sensation which she must partake
Perforce, since whatsoever met her view
Struck not on memory, though a heavy ache
Lay at her heart, whose earliest beat, still true,
Brought back the sense of pain without the cause,
For, for a while, the furies made a pause.

(LXIII.)

She look'd on many a face with vacant eye,
On many a token, without knowing what;
She saw them watch her, without asking why;
And reck'd not who around her pillow sat:
Not speechless, though she spoke not; not a sigh
Relieved her thoughts; dull silence and quick chat
Were tried in vain by those who served: she gave
No sign, save breath, of having left the grave.

(LXIV.)

Her handmaids tended, but she heeded not;
Her father watch'd, she turn'd her eyes away;
She recognized no being, and no spot,
However dear, or cherish'd in their day.
They changed from room to room, but all forgot;
Gentle, but without memory, she lay.
At length those eyes, which they would fain be weaning
Back to old thoughts, wax'd full of fearful meaning.

(LXV.)

And then a slave bethought her of a harp;
The harper came, and tuned his instrument:
At the first notes, irregular and sharp,
On him her flashing eyes a moment bent,
Then to the wall she turn'd, as if to warp
Her thoughts from sorrow, through her heart re-sent;
And he began a long low island-song
Of ancient days, ere tyranny grew strong.

(LXVI.)

Anon her thin wan fingers beat the wall,
In time to his old tune: he changed the theme,

And sung of love; the fierce name struck through all
Her recollection; on her flash'd the dream
Of what she was, and is, if ye could call
To be so being: in a gushing stream
The tears rush'd forth from her o'erclouded brain,
Like mountain mists, at length dissolved in rain.

(LXVII.)

Short solace, vain relief! thought came too quick,
And whirl'd her brain to madness; she arose,
As one who ne'er had dwelt among the sick,
And flew at all she met, as on her foes.
But no one ever heard her speak or shriek,
Although her paroxysm drew towards its close:
Hers was a frenzy which disdain'd to rave,
Even when they smote her, in the hope to save.

(LXVIII.)

Yet she betray'd at times a gleam of sense;
Nothing could make her meet her father's face,
Though on all other things with looks intense
She gazed, but none she ever could retrace.
Food she refused, and raiment; no pretence
Avail'd for either; neither change of place,
Nor time, nor skill, nor remedy, could give her
Senses to sleep—the power seem'd gone for ever.

(LXIX.)

Twelve days and nights she wither'd thus; at last,
Without a groan, or sigh, or glance, to show
A parting pang, the spirit from her past:
And they who watched her nearest, could not know

The very instant, till the change that cast
Her sweet face into shadow, dull and slow,
Glazed o'er her eyes—the beautiful, the black—
Oh! to possess such lustre—and then lack!

(LXX.)

She died, but not alone; she held within
A second principle of life, which might
Have dawn'd a fair and sinless child of sin;
But closed its little being without light,
And went down to the grave unborn, wherein
Blossom and bough lie wither'd with one blight:
In vain the dews of Heaven descend above
The bleeding flower and blasted fruit of love.

(LXXI.)

Thus lived—thus died she; never more on her
Shall sorrow light, or shame. She was not made
Through years or moons the inner weight to bear,
Which colder hearts endure till they are laid
By age in earth: her days and pleasures were
Brief, but delightful—such as had not stay'd
Long with her destiny; but she sleeps well
By the sea-shore, whereon she loved to dwell.

(LXXII.)

That isle is now all desolate and bare,
Its dwellings down, its tenants pass'd away;
None but her own and father's grave is there,
And nothing outward tells of human clay:
Ye could not know where lies a thing so fair,
No stone is there to show, no tongue to say
What was; no dirge, except the hollow sea's,
Mourns o'er the beauty of the Cyclades.

(LXXIII.)

But many a Greek maid in a loving song
Sighs o'er her name; and many an islander
With her sire's story makes the night less long.
Valour was his, and beauty dwelt with her:
If she loved rashly, her life paid for wrong—
A heavy price must all pay, who thus err,
In some shape; let none think to fly the danger,
For soon or late Love is his own avenger.

CAIN.

1821.

LORD BYRON.

I.—CAIN AND LUCIFER.

(From Act II., Scene 1.)

Cain. Oh, god, or demon, or whate'er thou art,
Is yon our earth?

Lucifer. Dost thou not recognise
The dust which form'd your father?

Cain. Can it be?
Yon small blue circle, swinging in far ether,
With an inferior circlet near it still,
Which looks like that which lit our earthly night?
Is this our Paradise? Where are its walls,
And they who guard them?

Lucifer. Point me out the site
Of Paradise.

Cain. How should I? As we move
Like sunbeams onward, it grows small and smaller,
And as it waxes little, and then less,
Gathers a halo round it, like the light
Which shone the roundest of the stars when I
Beheld them from the skirts of Paradise:
Methinks they both, as we recede from them,
Appear to join the innumerable stars
Which are around us; and, as we move on,
Increase their myriads.

Lucifer. And if there should be
Worlds greater than thine own, inhabited
By greater things, and they themselves far more
In number than the dust of thy dull earth,

Though multiplied to animated atoms,
All living, and all doom'd to death, and wretched,
What wouldst thou think?
Cain. I should be proud of thought
Which knew such things.
Lucifer. But if that high thought were
Link'd to a servile mass of matter, and,
Knowing such things, aspiring to such things,
And science still beyond them, were chain'd down
To the most gross and petty paltry wants,
All foul and fulsome, and the very best
Of thine enjoyments a sweet degradation,
A most enervating and filthy cheat
To lure thee on to the renewal of
Fresh souls and bodies, all foredoom'd to be
As frail, and few so happy——
Cain. Spirit! I
Know nought of death, save as a dreadful thing
Of which I have heard my parents speak, as of
A hideous heritage I owe to them
No less than life; a heritage not happy,
If I may judge, till now. But, spirit! if
It be as thou hast said (and I within
Feel the prophetic torture of its truth),
Here let me die: for to give birth to those
Who can but suffer many years, and die,
Methinks is merely propagating death,
And multiplying murder.
Lucifer. Thou canst not
All die—there is what must survive.
Cain. The Other
Spake not of this unto my father, when
He shut him forth from Paradise, with death
Written upon his forehead. But at least

Let what is mortal of me perish, that
I may be in the rest as angels are.

Lucifer. I am angelic: wouldst thou be as I am?

Cain. I know not what thou art: I see thy power,
And see thou show'st me things beyond *my* power,
Beyond all power of my born faculties,
Although inferior still to my desires
And my conceptions.

Lucifer. What are they which dwell
So humbly in their pride, as to sojourn
With worms in clay?

Cain. And what art thou who dwellest
So haughtily in spirit, and canst range
Nature and immortality—and yet
Seem'st sorrowful?

Lucifer. I seem that which I am;
And therefore do I ask of thee, if thou
Wouldst be immortal?

Cain. Thou hast said, I must be
Immortal in despite of me. I knew not
This until lately; but since it must be,
Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn
To anticipate my immortality.

Lucifer. Thou didst before I came upon thee.

Cain. How?

Lucifer. By suffering.

Cain. And must torture be immortal?

Lucifer. We and thy sons will try. But now, behold!
Is it not glorious?

Cain. Oh, thou beautiful
And unimaginable ether! and
Ye multiplying masses of increased
And still increasing lights! what are ye? what
Is this blue wilderness of interminable

Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen
The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden?
Is your course measured for ye? Or do ye
Sweep on in your unbounded revelry
Through an aërial universe of endless
Expansion—at which my soul aches to think—
Intoxicated with eternity?
O God! O Gods! or whatsoe'er ye are!
How beautiful ye are! how beautiful
Your works, or accidents, or whatsoe'er
They may be! Let me die, as atoms die
(If that they die), or know ye in your might
And knowledge! My thoughts are not in this hour
Unworthy what I see, though my dust is;
Spirit! let me expire, or see them nearer.

Lucifer. Art thou not nearer? Look back to thine earth!

Cain. Where is it? I see nothing save a mass
Of most innumerable lights.

Lucifer. Look there!

Cain. I cannot see it.

Lucifer. Yet it sparkles still.

Cain. What,—yonder!

Lucifer. Yea.

Cain. And wilt thou tell me so?
Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-worms
Sprinkle the dusky groves and the green banks
In the dim twilight, brighter than yon world
Which bears them.

Lucifer. Thou hast seen both worms and worlds,
Each bright and sparkling,—what dost think of them?

Cain. That they are beautiful in their own sphere,
And that the night, which makes both beautiful,
The little shining fire-fly in its flight,

And the immortal star in its great course,
Must both be guided.
Lucifer. But by whom or what?
Cain. Show me.
Lucifer. Dar'st thou behold?
Cain. How know I what
I *dare* behold? As yet, thou hast shown nought
I dare not gaze on further.
Lucifer. On, then, with me.

II.—CAIN AND ADAH.

(From Act III.)

SCENE I.—*The Earth near* Eden, *as in* Act I.

Enter CAIN *and* ADAH.

Adah. HUSH! tread softly, Cain.
Cain. I will; but wherefore?
Adah. Our little Enoch sleeps upon yon bed
Of leaves, beneath the cypress.
Cain. Cypress! 'tis
A gloomy tree, which looks as if it mourn'd
O'er what it shadows; wherefore didst thou choose it
For our child's canopy?
Adah. Because its branches
Shut out the sun like night, and therefore seem'd
Fitting to shadow slumber.
Cain. Ay, the last—
And longest; but no matter—lead me to him.
[*They go up to the child.*
How lovely he appears! his little cheeks,
In their pure incarnation, vying with
The rose leaves strewn beneath them.
Adah. And his lips, too,
How beautifully parted! No; you shall not

Kiss him, at least not now: he will awake soon—
His hour of mid-day rest is nearly over;
But it were pity to disturb him till
'Tis closed.

Cain. You have said well; I will contain
My heart till then. He smiles, and sleeps!—Sleep on
And smile, thou little, young inheritor
Of a world scarce less young: sleep on, and smile!
Thine are the hours and days when both are cheering
And innocent! *thou* hast not pluck'd the fruit—
Thou know'st not thou art naked! Must the time
Come thou shalt be amerced for sins unknown,
Which were not thine nor mine? But now sleep on!
His cheeks are reddening into deeper smiles,
And shining lids are trembling o'er his long
Lashes, dark as the cypress which waves o'er them;
Half open, from beneath them the clear blue
Laughs out, although in slumber. He must dream—
Of what? Of Paradise!—Ay! dream of it,
My disinherited boy! 'Tis but a dream;
For never more thyself, thy sons, nor fathers,
Shall walk in that forbidden place of joy!

Adah. Dear Cain! Nay, do not whisper o'er our son
Such melancholy yearnings o'er the past:
Why wilt thou always mourn for Paradise?
Can we not make another?

Cain. Where?

Adah. Here, or
Where'er thou wilt: where'er thou art, I feel not
The want of this so much regretted Eden.
Have I not thee, our boy, our sire, and brother,
And Zillah—our sweet sister, and our Eve,
To whom we owe so much besides our birth?

Cain. Yes—death, too, is amongst the debts we owe he

Adah. Cain! that proud spirit, who withdrew thee hence
Hath saddened thine still deeper. I had hoped
The promised wonders which thou hast beheld,
Visions, thou say'st, of past and present worlds,
Would have composed thy mind into the calm
Of a contented knowledge; but I see
Thy guide hath done thee evil: still I thank him,
And can forgive him all, that he so soon
Hath given thee back to us.

Cain. So soon?

Adah. 'Tis scarcely
Two hours since ye departed: two *long* hours
To *me*, but only *hours* upon the sun.

Cain. And yet I have approach'd that sun, and seen
Worlds which he once shone on, and never more
Shall light; and worlds he never lit: methought
Years had roll'd o'er my absence.

Adah. Hardly hours.

Cain. The mind, then, hath capacity of time,
And measures it by that which it beholds,
Pleasing or painful; little or almighty.
I had beheld the immemorial works
Of endless beings; skirr'd extinguish'd worlds;
And, gazing on eternity, methought
I had borrow'd more by a few drops of ages
From its immensity; but now I feel
My littleness again. Well said the spirit,
That I was nothing!

Adah. Wherefore said he so?
Jehovah said not that.

Cain. No; *He* contents Him
With making us the *nothing* which we are;
And after flattering dust with glimpses of
Eden and Immortality, resolves

It back to dust again—for what?
Adah. Thou know'st—
Even for our parents' error.
Cain. What is that
To us? they sinn'd, then *let them* die!
Adah. Thou hast not spoken well, nor is that thought
Thy own, but of the spirit who was with thee.
Would *I* could die for them, so *they* might live!
Cain. Why, so say I—provided that one victim
Might satiate the insatiable of life,
And that our little rosy sleeper there
Might never taste of death or human sorrow,
Nor hand it down to those who spring from him.
Adah. How know we that some such atonement one day
May not redeem our race?
Cain. By sacrificing
The harmless for the guilty? What atonement
Were there? Why, *we* are innocent: what have we
Done, that we must be victims for a deed
Before our birth, or need have victims to
Atone for this mysterious, nameless sin—
If it be such a sin to seek for knowledge?
Adah. Alas! thou sinnest now, my Cain; thy words
Sound impious in mine ears.
Cain. Then leave me!
Adah. Never,
Though thy God left thee.
Cain. Say, what have we here?
Adah. Two altars, which our brother Abel made
During thine absence, whereupon to offer
A sacrifice to God on thy return.
Cain. And how knew *he* that *I* would be so ready
With the burnt-offerings, which he daily brings

With a meek brow, whose base humility
Shows more of fear than worship, as a bribe
To the Creator?

Adah. Surely, 'tis well done.

Cain. One altar may suffice; I have no offering.

Adah. The fruits of the earth, the early beautiful
Blossom and bud, and bloom of flowers and fruits;
These are a goodly offering to the Lord,
Given with a gentle and a contrite spirit.

Cain. I have toil'd and till'd, and sweaten in the sun
According to the curse:—must I do more?
For what should I be gentle? for a war
With all the elements ere they will yield
The bread we eat? For what must I be grateful?
For being dust, and grovelling in the dust,
Till I return to dust? If I am nothing—
For nothing shall I be an hypocrite,
And seem well pleased with pain? For what should I
Be contrite?—for my father's sin, already
Expiate with what we all have undergone,
And to be more than expiated by
The ages prophesied, upon our seed?
Little deems our young blooming sleeper there,
The germs of an eternal misery
To myriads is within him! Better 'twere
I snatch'd him in his sleep, and dash'd him 'gainst
The rocks, than let him live to——

Adah. Oh, my God!
Touch not the child—my child! *thy* child! Oh Cain!

Cain. Fear not! for all the stars, and all the power
Which sways them, I would not accost yon infant
With ruder greeting, than a father's kiss.

Adah. Then why so awful in thy speech?

Cain. I said,

'Twere better that he ceased to live, than give
Life to so much of sorrow as he must
Endure, and harder still, bequeath; but since
That saying jars you, let us only say—
'Twere better that he never had been born.

Adah. Oh, do not say so! Where were then the joys,
The mother's joys of watching, nourishing,
And loving him? Soft! he awakes. Sweet Enoch!
[*She goes to the child.*
Oh Cain! look on him; see how full of life,
Of strength, of bloom, of beauty, and of joy,
How like to me—how like to thee, when gentle,
For *then* we are *all* alike: is't not so, Cain?
Mother, and sire, and son, our features are
Reflected in each other; as they are
In the clear waters, when *they* are *gentle*, and
When *thou* art *gentle*. Love us, then, my Cain!
And love thyself for our sakes, for we love thee.
Look! how he laughs and stretches out his arms,
And opens wide his blue eyes upon thine,
To hail his father; while his little form
Flutters as wing'd with joy. Talk not of pain!
The childless cherubs well might envy thee
The pleasures of a parent! Bless him, Cain!
As yet he hath no words to thank thee, but
His heart will, and thine own too.

Cain. Bless thee, boy!
If that a mortal blessing may avail thee,
To save thee from the serpent's curse!

Adah. It shall.
Surely a father's blessing may avert
A reptile's subtlety.

Cain. Of that I doubt;
But bless him ne'er the less.

Edwin Atherstone.

1788—1872.

Edwin Atherstone, poet, novelist, and dramatist, was born on April the 17th, 1788. His first work, "The Last Days of Herculaneum," published in 1821, is a poem in blank verse based upon the account of the destruction of the ancient city, by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius A.D. 79, given by the younger Pliny in his letters to Tacitus. In 1824 the poet published "A Midsummer Day's Dream," an imaginative poem, written in stately, if not majestic, blank verse. In 1828 he commenced the publication of his chief poem, "The Fall of Nineveh," a work which in its complete form comprises no less than thirty books. Turning his attention to prose, he produced in 1830 an historical romance of the age of Alfred the Great, which he entitled "The Sea Kings of England." The following years were occupied in the completion of the poem on "The Fall of Nineveh." In 1858 he published a work entitled "The Handwriting on the Wall," in which he celebrated the story of the fall of Babylon in prose as he had done the sister story of the fall of Nineveh in verse; and three years later (1861) issued another gigantic poetic work, entitled "Israel in Egypt," which comprises twenty-seven books, and nearly twenty thousand lines. A second edition of "The Fall of Nineveh" appeared in 1868, and a volume of dramas, written

in the twenties, was published by his daughter—Mary Elizabeth Atherstone—in 1888. The poet, who, for several years before his death, enjoyed a literary pension of £100, died at Bath, January 29th, 1872. His failure to hold, or even to acquire a public, was attributed in his own day to want of restraint, which permitted extravagance of language and excess of ornamentation. He had large powers of description and a keen eye for pictorial effect, but these faculties when not kept under proper control are apt, as in his case, to obscure the action and retard the progress of the narratives they should vivify and aid. There are many fine descriptive passages in these poems, but they lack dramatic movement and human interest. That the poet could tell a simple story with real poetic force is proved by the selection given from his first work, and that he had dramatic power is shown by the short dramatic sketch taken from the same volume.

ALFRED H. MILES.

THE LAST DAYS OF HERCULANEUM.

EDWIN ATHERSTONE.

Herculaneum (Ital. Ercolano) was an ancient city of Southern Italy, situated about seven miles from Naples, near the Bay of Naples, and at the west declivity of Mount Vesuvius. It was destroyed during the eruption which took place 24th August, A.D. 79, being submerged by showers of ashes.

THERE was a man,
A Roman soldier, for some daring deed
That trespass'd on the laws (as spirits bold
And young will oft from mere impulse of blood,
And from no taint of viciousness, o'erleap
The boundaries of right), in dungeon low
Chain'd down. His was a noble spirit, rough,
But generous, and brave, and kind. While yet
The beard was new and tender on his chin,
A stolen embrace had given a young one claim
To call him father;—'twas a rosy boy,
A little faithful copy of his sire
In face and gesture. In her pangs she died
That gave him birth; and ever since the imp
Had been his father's solace and his care.
By day his play-fellow and guard,
He made him mimic shields and helms of straw,
And taught him how to use his falchion dire
Of lath: to leap; to run; to lie in ambush close;
To couch his little spear; his wooden steed

With fiery eyes, and arching neck, and ears
For ever, as they caught the sounds of war, erect,
Fearless to mount and tame in all his pride :
By night the boy was pillow'd on his arm.
At morn they rose together; in the woods
At springtime to hunt out the squirrel's nest;
Or of their spotted eggs—or chirping young
To spoil the timid birds :—or through the fields,
Spangled with dewy diamonds, would they roam
To pluck the gaudy flowers :—or in the brook
Would snare the glittering fry :—or banks of mud
With mighty toil thrown up, throw down again,
For childhood's weighty reasons.
Every sport
The father shared and heighten'd. But at length
The rigorous law had grasp'd him, and condemn'd
To fetters and to the darkness. He had borne
His sentence without shrinking, like a son
Of that imperial city at whose frown
Earth's nations shook;—and would have bid adieu
To the bright heavens awhile, and the green earth,
And the sweet air, and sweeter liberty,—
Nor would have utter'd plaint, nor dress'd his face
That loved to smile in sorrow's livery ;—
But when he took that boy within his arms,
And kiss'd his pale and frighten'd face; and felt
The little heart within his sobbing breast
Beating with quick, hard strokes,—and knew he tried,
Child as he was, to keep his sorrows hid
From his fond father's eye ;—Oh ! then the tears
Fast trickled down his cheeks;—his mighty heart
Seem'd bursting :—strong, convulsive sobbings choked
His parting blessing. With averted head,
(For when he look'd upon that innocent face

He felt a burning in his brain that warn'd
Of madness if he gazed, such torturing thoughts
Came crowding with each look) he blest, embraced,
And bade his boy farewell.
The captive's lot
He felt in all its bitterness; the walls
Of his deep dungeon answer'd many a sigh
And heart-heaved groan. His tale was known, and touch'
His jailor with compassion;—and the boy,
Thenceforth a frequent visitor, beguiled
His father's lingering hours, and brought a balm
With his loved presence that in every wound
Dropt healing. But in this terrific hour
He was a poison'd arrow in the breast
Where he had been a cure.
With earliest morn
Of that first day of darkness and amaze
He came. The iron door was closed,—for them
Never to open more! The day, the night,
Dragg'd slowly by; nor did they know the fate
Impending o'er the city. Well they heard
The pent-up thunders in the earth beneath,
And felt its giddy rocking; and the air
Grew hot at length, and thick; but in his straw
The boy was sleeping, and the father hoped
The earthquake might pass by; nor would he wake
From his sound rest th' unfearing child, nor tell
The dangers of their state. On his low couch
The fettered soldier sunk, and with deep awe
Listened the fearful sounds:—with upturn'd eye
To the great gods he breath'd a prayer;—then strove
To calm himself, and lose in sleep awhile
His useless terrors. But he could not sleep:—
His body burn'd with feverish heat;—his chains

Clank'd loud although he moved not: deep in earth
Groan'd unimaginable thunders:—sounds,
Fearful and ominous, arose and died
Like the sad moanings of November's wind
In the blank midnight. Deepest horror chill'd
His blood that burn'd before:—cold clammy sweats
Came o'er him:—then anon a fiery thrill
Shot through his veins. Now on his couch he shrunk
And shiver'd as in fear:—now upright leap'd,
As though he heard the battle trumpet sound,
And long'd to cope with death.
He slept at last,
A troubled dreamy sleep. Well,—had he slept
Never to waken more! His hours are few,
But terrible his agony. The night
Dragg'd slowly by:—the hours of morning pass'd:—
The gory sun had shown his mocking light
In the red heavens a moment, and gone back
To his deep shrine of darkness:—night had come
At noon upon the earth:—the heavy floods
Of black and steaming rain had fallen:—but they,
That miserable sire and son knew not,
And sleep was heavy on them.
Soon the storm
Burst forth: the lightnings glanced:—the air
Shook with the thunders. They awoke:—they sprung
Amazed upon their feet. The dungeon glowed
A moment as in sunshine,—and was dark:—
Again a flood of white flame fills the cell;
Dying away upon the dazzled eye
In darkening, quivering tints, as stunning sound
Dies throbbing, ringing in the ear. Silence,
And blackest darkness.—With intensest awe
The soldier's frame was fill'd; and many a thought

Of strange foreboding hurried through his mind,
As underneath he felt the fever'd earth
Jarring and lifting, and the massive walls
Heard harshly grate and strain :—yet knew he not,
While evils undefined and yet to come
Glanced through his thoughts, what deep and cureless wound
Fate had already given.—Where, man of woe!
Where wretched father! is thy boy? Thou call'st
His name in vain :—he cannot answer thee.

Loudly the father call'd upon his child :—
No voice replied. Trembling and anxiously
He search'd their couch of straw:—with headlong haste
Trod round his stinted limits, and, low bent,
Groped darkling on the earth :—no child was there.
Again he call'd :—again at farthest stretch
Of his accursèd fetters,—till the blood
Seem'd bursting from his ears, and from his eyes
Fire flash'd,—he strain'd with arm extended far
And fingers widely spread, greedy to touch
Though but his idol's garment. Useless toil!
Yet still renew'd :—still round and round he goes,
And strains and snatches,—and with dreadful cries,
Calls on his boy. Mad frenzy fires him now :—
He plants against the wall his feet ;—his chain
Grasps ;—tugs with giant strength to force away
The deep-driven staple ;—yells and shrieks with rage,
And like a desert lion in the snare
Raging to break his toils,—to and fro bounds.
But see! the ground is opening :—a blue light
Mounts, gently waving,—noiseless :—thin and cold
It seems, and like a rainbow tint, not flame ;
But by its lustre, on the earth outstretch'd,
Behold the lifeless child!—his dress is singed,

And over his serene face a dark line
Points out the lightning's track.
The father saw,—
And all his fury fled:—a dead calm fell
That instant on him:—speechless, fix'd he stood,
And with a look that never wander'd, gazed
Intensely on the corse. Those laughing eyes
Were not yet closed,—and round those pouting lips
The wonted smile return'd.
Silent and pale
The father stands:—no tear is in his eye:—
The thunders bellow,—but he hears them not:—
The ground lifts like a sea:—he knows it not:—
The strong walls grind and gape:—the vaulted roof
Takes shapes like bubble tossing in the wind:—
See! he looks up and smiles; for death to him
Is happiness. Yet could one last embrace
Be given, 'twere still a sweeter thing to die.

It will be given. Look! how the rolling ground,
At every swell, nearer and still more near
Moves tow'rds the father's outstretch'd arm his boy:—
Once he has touch'd his garment;—how his eye
Lightens with love—and hope—and anxious fears!
Ha! see! he has him now! he clasps him round—
Kisses his face;—puts back the curling locks
That shaded his fine brow:—looks in his eyes—
Grasps in his own those little dimpled hands—
Then folds him to his breast, as he was wont
To lie when sleeping—and resign'd, awaits
Undreaded death.
And death came soon and swift
And pangless.
The huge pile sunk down at once
Into the opening earth. Walls—arches—roof—
And deep foundation-stones—all mingling, fell!—

A DRAMATIC SKETCH.

EDWIN ATHERSTONE.

The following sketch was suggested by Chateaubriand's description of the ruins of Sparta.

SCENE—*Sparta.*

The shade of Leonidas, brought by the ministers of Pluto from the Infernal Regions at the commencement of the nineteenth century, that he may contemplate the ravages of Time on his beloved native place. From the hill of the Citadel he looks anxiously around, and in an angry and disappointed tone exclaims to the attending spirits—

WHY do ye mock me thus?—
Ye said I should behold my native place,
Immortal Sparta:—mother of the race
Invincible:—the scourge of tyranny,
The dread of mightiest monarchs, and the home
Of persecuted freedom.—I had thought
To see a city, in whose boundless scope
Whole nations might have wander'd;—where the eye
Might vainly stretch to compass at a view
Its mighty bulk: where, strong and bold as gods,
Her sons might lift their foreheads to the sky,
Happy and free,—the wonder of the earth.
Three thousand years almost of aiding time
Must have done this, or more: all Greece perhaps

May now be only Sparta.---Taunting things!
Why do ye mock me thus?—

Spirit. Illustrious shade,
We mock thee not.—Look round again, and mark
If aught recall thy Sparta.—

Leonidas. Scoffing fiend!—
Desist thy lying tale;—nor vex my soul
With unendurable thoughts.—It cannot be.
The glorious city towers above the earth,
Supreme among the nations; and her fame
Sounds through the echoing universe. Her arms
Flash from the furthest regions of the East,
Where the bright sun gets up, to where he sinks,
Quench'd in the bottomless Ocean of the West.—
Her splendour cannot darken, nor her walls
Moulder in endless ages;—nor her sons
Forget their father's deeds,—But ye would sport
With mortal weakness;—sneer at patriot's warmth,
And laugh to scorn the pangs of wretched man,
Who dreads his country's ruin.—If not so,
Why place me here, perchance in Afric's wilds,
For all is drear and foreign to my gaze;
Why point with mocking finger to yon piles
Of black and hideous ruins, and pronounce
Th' adored name of Sparta?—Wherefore this?—

Spirit. Unhappy Greek!—We would not mock thy woe:
Self moved we come not, but by his command
Who rules the realms beneath.—Where stand'st thou now?—
[*A long pause.*
Doth nought recall the hill, where proudly rose
Famed Sparta's Citadel?— [*An anxious silence.*

Do yon dark walls,
Arch'd like the crescent moon, suggest no trace
Of that vast theatre, where thousands raised
The thunders of applause? 'Tis silent now:
And the grey lizard, its sole tenant, crawls
With noiseless foot from forth the gloomy shade,
To bask in the hot sun. Thou seem'st o'erwhelm'd
With dread, yet unbelieving.—Cast thy look
On yon red distant mountains; there at least
Time hath not brought destruction.—
Know'st thou not
The hills of Menalaion? Winding still
'Tween yonder rising grounds, doth not thine eye
Behold Eurotas?—and, in shapeless heaps,
Choking the stream o'er which it proudly spann'd
Babyx, the ancient bridge?

Leonidas (*with agony*). I cannot tell—
This is some cheating vision, and mine eyes
Do look on things that be not.—Ah! forbear—
And torture me no more.—

Spirit. Look once again—
View to the North, yon towering hill:—the vale
That meets its base hath not a ruin left;—
No stone that tells of human labours there:
Yet on that naked plain thou must recall
The public place, with all the princely piles
That rear'd their heads to heaven.

Leonidas (*in despair*). Oh! 'tis too true!
Sparta is gone!—Capricious Jove, thy hand
Hath wrought this matchless misery: the world
Bringing its force united—from the boy

Who strains his maiden bow-string to the wretch
Whose aged arm can barely lift the sword,
All in one league combined—had not sufficed
For such unequall'd ruin.

[*A band of Turks, with martial music and all their military parade, march in the distance.*

What are these?
Is this some holiday?—and can the Greeks
Unfeeling, unabash'd, with dance and song,
And quaint attire, pass Sparta's awful grave,
Nor dread from vengeful Heav'n an equal fate?

Spirit. Wretched Leonidas! the arm of Jove
Hath not destroy'd thy city: whom thou see'st
Are Turks, a barbarous race. Greece is no more—
Sparta—and Athens—Argos—Corinth—all
The glorious family of Greece are fallen:—
Her sons are slaves—her very name is 'rased
From out the book of nations.—Manners—laws—
Customs—and language—all are swept away
In one vast desolation: and yon bands
Of tawdry warriors, whom thine erring eye
Deem'd unrespective jesters—wield the scourge
That bows the Grecian spirit to the dust:—
Sole lords and conquerors they.—

Leonidas—(after a long pause and in unspeakable agony). Take me to hell again.

Sir Aubrey de Vere.

1788—1846.

In every generation there have been some writers possessing genuine poetic gifts, who have been content to write poetry for its own sake without hope of pecuniary reward, and even without expectation of large recognition of their poetic claims, content should their work earn the judicious praise of a select few well qualified to judge. In Sir Aubrey de Vere's generation such writers were more common than now, and among them he holds a not undistinguished place. His verse displays much delicacy and strength of thought, combined with a vivid apprehension of the beauty of form; and in word-painting his powers were so considerable as to cause a painter to remark that a picture might be painted from one of his descriptions. Never rising to the passionate intensity of imaginative ardour which marks the great poet, he rarely ceases to be, either in conception or in execution, poetic.

Sir Aubrey de Vere Hunt was born at Curragh Chase, in the county of Limerick, on August 28th, 1788. After spending some time at Ambleside under the care of a tutor, he passed to Harrow, where he was a contemporary of Byron and Sir Robert Peel. The latter wrote on one occasion to "save" his young friend Aubrey "trouble, a copy of Latin verses so good that the 'fine Roman hand' was

well-nigh detected, and the two boys with difficulty escaped punishment." Sir Aubrey de Vere Hunt went to no University, and married at the very early age of eighteen. In 1832 he assumed by royal licence the ancestral surname of de Vere in place of Hunt.

His career was outwardly quiet and uneventful—the career of a country gentleman, chiefly resident on his own property, and largely occupied with the duties belonging to his station. He regarded the friendship of Wordsworth as "one of the chief honours of his later life," and two sojourns in the Lake country as among its chief pleasures. Some of these happy memories furnished him with the materials for his fine descriptive sonnet, "Rydal with Wordsworth"—a sonnet which clearly shows that, great as was his enjoyment of the loveliness of nature, his supreme delight was in intercourse with that eminent poet. As a connecting link of some interest between the two men, this sonnet may here be quoted in full—

"What we beheld scarce can I now recall
In one connected picture; images
Hurrying so swiftly their fresh witcheries
O'er the mind's mirror, that the several
Seems lost, or blended in the mighty All:—
Lone lakes; rills gushing through rock-rooted trees;
Peaked mountains, shadowing vales of peacefulness;
Glens, echoing to the flashing waterfall.
Then that sweet twilight isle, with friends delayed
Beside a ferny bank, 'neath oaks and yews
The moon between two mountain peaks embayed;
Heaven and the waters dyed with sunset hues:
And He, the Poet of the age and land,
Discoursing, as we wandered, hand in hand.'

Sir Aubrey de Vere died at Curragh Chase, on July 28th, 1846.

He wrote but little poetry until over thirty years of age, and his first work, "Julian the Apostate," a poetical drama, did not appear until 1822. It was followed, in 1823, by "The Duke of Mercia," another play. Then he published nothing, until, in 1842, "A Song of Faith, and other Poems" appeared. "Mary Tudor," his most vigorous dramatic effort, written during the last year of his life, was published posthumously in 1847. A subject more essentially difficult of treatment by an English poet than the story of Mary Tudor is hard to imagine. Associated for ever as her name is with that side of the Romish Church which makes it the saddest spectacle in all history—the Church's fight for power by the aid of the thumb-screw, the rack, and the stake—Mary's character is in the English mind a subject of peculiar horror and detestation, while her relations as a woman with Philip were unpleasant and almost contemptible. Not even the genius of Lord Tennyson, who dramatised her story in a play which many think contains his best dramatic writing, could enlist English sympathies for such a character. Nevertheless Sir Aubrey de Vere's play, though it did not receive the author's final revisions, must be placed high among his works.

As a sonnet writer he holds a worthy place. Since his time so much attention has been given to this form of poetry that many of his sonnets, which were once deemed perfect, would be no longer considered so. But in substance they are rarely less than satisfactory. Wordsworth spoke of them as "among the most perfect of our age," and we cannot feel surprised at this warm praise

when we note the vigour and strength of thought displayed in the following sonnet, entitled "The True Basis of Power"—

"Power's footstool is Opinion, and his throne
The Human Heart: thus only Kings maintain
Prerogatives God-sanctioned. The coarse chain
Tyrants would bind around us may be blown
Aside, like foam, that with a breath is gone:
For there's a tide within the popular vein
That despots in their pride may not restrain;
Swoln with a vigour that is all its own.
Ye who would steer along these doubtful seas,
Lifting your proud sails to high heaven, beware!
Rocks throng the waves, and tempests load the breeze
Go, search the shores of History—mark there
The Oppressor's lot, the Tyrant's destinies:
Behold the Wrecks of Ages; and despair!"

It is, indeed, mainly on his sonnets that Sir Aubrey de Vere's reputation must ultimately rest. Marred occasionally by that diffuseness which so often accompanies facility, and by imperfect rhymes, such as "trees" with "peacefulness" in "Rydal with Wordsworth," they show, notwithstanding, many remarkable qualities. The influence of Wordsworth and of some of the Italian poets (particularly Petrarch and Filicaja whom Sir Aubrey de Vere took as models for his earlier sonnets) is apparent, but his sonnets are never merely imitative, and they prove their author to have possessed originality, both of thought and expression.

MACKENZIE BELL.

SONNETS.

SIR AUBREY DE VERE.

I.—WATERLOO.

WHY have the Mighty lived—why have they died?
Is it ever thus with idle wreck to strew
Fields such as thine, remorseless Waterloo?
Hopeless the lesson! Vainly hath ever cried
Stern Fate to man—"So perish human pride!"
Still must the Many combat for the Few:
Still must the noblest blood fair earth bedew:
Tyrants, slaves, freemen, mouldering side by side!
On such a day the World was lost, and won,
By Pompey at Pharsalia: such a day
Saw glorious Hannibal a fugitive:
So faded 'neath the Macedonian Sun
Persia's pale star: so empire passed away
From Harold's brow,—but He disdained to live!

II.—THE ROCK OF CASHEL.

ROYAL and saintly Cashel! I would gaze
Upon the wreck of thy departed powers
Not in the dewy light of matin hours,
Nor the meridian pomp of summer's blaze,
But at the close of dim autumnal days,
When the sun's parting glance, through slanting showers
Sheds o'er thy rock-throned battlements and towers
Such awful gleams as brighten o'er Decay's
Prophetic cheek. At such a time, methinks,
There breathes from thy lone courts and voiceless aisles
A melancholy moral, such as sinks
On the lone traveller's heart amid the piles
Of vast Persepolis on her mountain stand,
Or Thebes half buried in the desert sand.

III.—THE SEA-CLIFFS OF KILKEE.

AWFULLY beautiful art thou, O sea!
Viewed from the vantage of these giant rocks
That vast in air lift their primeval blocks,
Skreening the sandy cove of lone Kilkee.
Cautious, with out-stretched arm, and bended knee,
I scan the dread abyss, 'till the depth mocks
My straining eyeballs, and the eternal shocks
Of billows rolling from infinity
Disturb my brain. Hark! the shrill sea-bird's scream!
Cloud-like they sweep the long wave's sapphire gleam,
Ere the poised Ospray stoops in wrath from high.
Here Man, alone, is nought; Nature supreme,
Where all is simply great that meets the eye—
The precipice, the ocean, and the sky.

IV.—GLENGARIFF. 1.

GAZING from each low bulwark of this bridge,
How wonderful the contrast! Dark as night,
Here, amid cliffs and woods, with headlong might
The black stream whirls, through ferns and drooping sedge,
'Neath twisted roots moss-brown, and weedy ledge,
Gushing;—aloft, from yonder birch-clad height
Leaps into air a cataract, snow-white;
Falling to gulfs obscure. The mountain ridge,
Like a grey Warder, guardian of the scene,
Above the cloven gorge gloomily towers:
O'er the dim woods a gathering tempest lours;
Save where athwart the moist leaves' lucid green
A sunbeam, glancing through disparted showers,
Sparkles along the rill with diamond sheen!

V.—GLENGARIFF. 2.

A SUN-BURST on the Bay! Turn and behold!
The restless waves, resplendent in their glory,
Sweep glittering past yon purpled promontory,
Bright as Apollo's breastplate. Bathed in gold,
Yon bastioned islet gleams. Thin mists are rolled,
Translucent, through each glen. A mantle hoary
Veils those peaked hills shapely as e'er in story
Delphic, or Alpine, or Vesuvian old,
Minstrels have sung. From rock and headland proud
The wild wood spreads its arms around the bay:
The manifold mountain cones, now dark, now bright,
Now seen, now lost, alternate from rich light
To spectral shade; and each dissolving cloud
Reveals new mountains while it floats away.

VI.—THE CHILDREN BAND.

ALL holy influences dwell within
The breast of Childhood: instincts fresh from God
Inspire it, ere the heart beneath the rod
Of grief hath bled, or caught the plague of sin.
How mighty was that fervour which could win
Its way to infant souls!—and was the sod
Of Palestine by infant Croises trod?
Like Joseph went they forth, or Benjamin,
In all their touching beauty, to redeem?
And did their soft lips kiss the sepulchre?
Alas! the lovely pageant, as a dream
Faded! they sank not through ignoble fear;
They felt not Moslem steel. By mountain, stream,
In sands, in fens, they died—no mother near!

VII.—THE RIGHT USE OF PRAYER.

THEREFORE when thou wouldst pray, or dost thine alms
Blow not a trump before thee: hypocrites
Do thus, vaingloriously; the common streets
Boast of their largess, echoing their psalms.
On such the laud of men, like unctuous balms,
Falls with sweet savour. Impious Counterfeits!
Prating of heaven, for earth their bosom beats!
Grasping at weeds, they lose immortal palms!
God needs not iteration nor vain cries:
That man communion with his God might share
Below, Christ gave the ordinance of prayer:
Vague ambages, and witless ecstasies,
Avail not: ere a voice to prayer be given
The heart should rise on wings of love to heaven.

VIII.—THE BROTHERHOOD IN CHRIST.

ALL men are brethren in God's equal eye;
Yea, sons of God, partaking Christian grace.
How fades all outward pomp of power and place,
Glory and wealth, frail beauty's pageantry,
Prerogatives of earth that swiftly fly,
Before that noblest birthright of our race,
The Brotherhood with Christ! Now face to face
With God we stand. In Him disparity
Of love, proportioned to man's earthly state,
Exists not: right of eldership is none
Where all with Christ are heirs. The Low, the Great,
The Wise, the Simple, gather round His throne
In heaven, one equal boon to supplicate:—
God's sons confest! the Brethren of the Son!

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

1792—1822.

Of all our modern poets, no name, perhaps, has gathered round it such a diversity of criticism as that of Percy Bysshe Shelley. Even during his lifetime the most opposite views were held of his personal character and his genius; and the years that have elapsed since his premature death have served only to widen the field of controversy. His lofty and lark-like outpourings of song, his high-strung sensitive nature, his unrestful life, and most sad end have lifted him into an almost ideal position in the hearts of some; while his iconoclasm and his passionate rejection of every moral and social law that did not commend itself to his reason or taste have made him, in the eyes of others, an Ishmael and an outcast. Extolled by one set of critics as one of the purest-hearted of men, and inveighed against by another group as a creature of impulse, flighty, suspicious, and untrustworthy,—the student of his biography must feel positively bewildered; the more so, as, in all probability, no further light will be thrown on the question, sufficient to secure an undisputed verdict.

The poet was of gentle birth. His grandfather, Sir Bysshe, was an electioneering Sussex squire of the old type, whose successive alliances had brought much money into the family; and the pleasant property

of Field Place, near Horsham, was assigned by him to his son Timothy, the poet's father. Here, on the 4th of August, 1792, Percy Bysshe Shelley was born, and here his childhood was spent.

The imaginative nature of the boy was early apparent. Even those who knew him the best, his four sisters and playmates, while they acknowledged him to be the most delightful of companions, stood a little in awe of his strange ways, whenever one of his weird moods was on. Who so kind and considerate as he during the last mile of a country ramble, when tired feet began to lag and falter? But who so alarming and mysterious, when it was a case of story-telling after dark? The little girls could partly understand his love for wonder-working with his chemicals and his electric battery; but when it came to diabolical processions with braziers of burning fuel, blue lights, and grotesque dresses, their fears got the better of their fascination. Thus early did he show that love of the wild and unearthly which figures so largely in his poetry. Certainly, of very few poets could such a reminiscence be told as that which recounts how young Shelley once set a stack of faggots in a blaze "in order that he might have a little hell of his own"!

From the congenial freedom of Field Place he was removed at the age of ten to a boarding school at Brentford, where his eccentric ways, his girlish beauty, and his distaste for the rough sports of the playground estranged him from his schoolfellows. At twelve he passed on to Eton. During the interval between Eton and Oxford, Shelley was on the point of becoming engaged to his cousin, Harriet Grove; but parental alarm was

aroused by the young suitor's unorthodox views on serious subjects, and before long the match was broken off. Then the desire for fame as an author seized him, and he succeeded not only in "placing" his raw venture "Zastrozzi," but actually obtained for this novel the sum of £40. Another book, with a mysterious joint-authorship, "Original Poetry, by Victor and Cazire," followed, but was soon withdrawn from circulation. A second novel, "St. Irvyne," showed as little merit as its predecessor.

During his residence at University College, Oxford, Shelley made the acquaintance of Thomas Jefferson Hogg, a shrewd, sardonic fellow, who, though scarcely the associate for a lad of Shelley's earnest bent and plastic nature, was destined to furnish one of the best biographies that we have of the poet. From it we quote the following portrait: "His figure was slight and fragile, . . . he was tall, but he stooped so much that he seemed of a low stature. His clothes were expensive, and made according to the most approved mode of the day; but they were tumbled, rumpled, unbrushed. His gestures were abrupt, and sometimes violent, occasionally even awkward, yet more frequently gentle and graceful." We are further told that his voice, naturally rich and musical, was harsh and shrill when he was agitated or excited. But his dark blue eyes, his long brown locks, and his frequently animated expression made his one of the most picturesque of faces. His habits were most eccentric and unconventional; and he brought to Oxford all his boyish delight in acids and crucibles. He was a voracious reader, but too often the books were not those prescribed by the authorities. As

for his personal qualities, the statements of those who knew him then and in later life bear ample witness to the spirit of unselfishness which made his so lovable a nature. Both in his conception of wide remedial schemes and in the little kindnesses of every-day life, this was manifest. In stability and moral balance he was seriously lacking, but if, like Leigh Hunt's Ben Adhem, he appeal to be judged "as one that loves his fellow men," then, in many a company, the name of Shelley would "lead all the rest." In his open-handed generosity to embarrassed friends, in his ready forgiveness of injury, in his sick-visiting at Marlow, and his share in the Tannyralt project of land reclamation, we have an explanation of the charm which Shelley appears to have exercised over those with whom he came in contact.

One almost needs to be possessed of a share of his own rare spirit to understand what has been aptly termed his "unworldliness." Coldly scanned, his life appears full of quixotic vagaries and irrational schemes, passionate aversions and untenable positions. To those especially who follow the bell-wether of conventional custom Shelley must always be a wilful strayed sheep. But judge him by motives, and prejudice must at many points give way. There are passages in his life which shock and perplex us; for instance, we cannot for a moment palliate the treatment of his girl-wife, poor Harriet Westbrook, which in itself was shameful. But our astonishment is greatly modified when we learn what views were held, sincerely and unaffectedly, by the poet, on conjugal ties. It does not excuse, but in a large measure it explains,

behaviour which it has been found difficult to reconcile with his evident unselfishness and lofty aspirations. The life of Shelley is, indeed, one great paradox, and the latest details, furnished by Professor Dowden's two volumes, do not tend to diminish our surprise.

Much of the prescribed work at Oxford was unpalatable, but the quiet seclusion of his rooms was a joy to him, and his abrupt departure was by no means unattended with regret. It was the crude and foolish pamphlet on Atheism which incensed the authorities, and led to the expulsion of himself and his friend Hogg. Shelley speedily found himself alienated not only from his late preceptors, but also from his father, the sorely-puzzled squire of Field Place. In 1812, he completed "Queen Mab." The ill-advised and hasty marriage with his sisters' schoolfellow, Miss Westbrook, ended in a separation; and for her suicide later on Shelley was morally responsible. In Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, daughter of the author of "Political Justice," the poet found a far more suitable and congenial companion, and on the death of Harriet he wedded her. A six weeks' tour through France and Switzerland, and the settlement of an annuity by Sir Timothy Shelley on his son, were the next events of importance. At the close of the warm dry summer of 1815, among the oak-glades of Windsor Great Park, was composed "Alastor, or The Spirit of Solitude."

In 1816 Shelley and his wife were again on the Continent, this time with Lord Byron. The following summer was spent among Thames-side scenery, and while floating in his boat under the trees

at Marlow, Shelley wrote "Laon and Cythna," better known as "The Revolt of Islam." This year was embittered by a dispute with Harriet's father about the custody of the two children she had borne to Shelley. A legal ruling eventually deprived him of his rights as a parent.

In March 1818, the Shelleys left England for the last time together. Italy was their destination. Residence under the bright skies of the peninsula had its effect on the genius as well as the physical health of Shelley, as it had on that of the Brownings later. New impulse and inspiration came from contact with the warm wealth of life around him, the splendid phenomena of fiery dawns and superb sunsets,

> "Great noontides, thunderstorms, all glaring pomps
> Which triumph at the heels of the god June
> Leading his revel through our leafy world."—(*R.B.*)

The chestnut-woods of Lucca and the water-ways of Venice, the sapphire bays of Campania and the art-galleries of Tuscan cities, alike fed his eager spirit; and his detailed and delightful letters to Peacock, Leigh Hunt, and other friends in England, overflow with warm admiration. His ample and uninterrupted leisure was studiously employed. He sought a fuller acquaintance with the Greek classics; with characteristic facility he mastered fresh languages, and read Goethe, Rousseau, Dante, Ariosto, and Calderon.

"Rosalind and Helen" was finished in this year 1818. With it were published two other poems; one, entitled "Lines written among the Euganean Hills," with its cry of weariness and heart-ache; the other, the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty." In the latter

we have the expression of what was a leading motive in the poet's life: the absorbing desire of and pursuit after an ideal of beauty, not sensuous but abstract and spiritual, beauty in her elemental purity. Earnestly he sought it, but the ideal proved as fleeting and elusive as any oread's face seen by shepherd among the hill pines of Ida.

In "Julian and Maddalo" we trace allusions to the writer's intimacy with Lord Byron at Venice. A period of mental depression was passed by Shelley at Naples, but health and good spirits returned, and at Rome in the spring of the following year (1819), among the lovely ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, he wrote his master-piece, "Prometheus Unbound"—"a lyrical drama," to use his own description, "with characters and mechanism of a kind yet unattempted." He himself considered it the finest of his poems. Provoking comparison, as it does, with the work of Æschylus, its incorporeal figures have been contrasted unfavourably by some critics with the clear-cut firm delineations of the Greek. The temperament and the purpose of Shelley, however, made this inevitable. Both poems are sublime; but the sublimity of the Attic drama is that of statuary, the sublimity of the English that of song. We meet again in this work the familiar Shelleyan theme of revolt against authority, the assertion of the spirit of man against impersonated Law. But the conception is, in one respect, a false one; for, as Professor Dowden remarks, Humanity is no chained Titan resisting an external tyranny, but a weak, erring, imperfect thing, struggling towards Divine excellence. What Keats finely called "the giant agony of the world" is only too manifest a reality; but the rebel

angel in Shelley led him to depict the Higher Power as deliberately inflicting that agony, and the old myth lent itself admirably to his purpose. Some of the lyrics, especially in the latter portion of the drama, illustrate a fault by no means uncommon in Shelley's poetry, viz., the pouring forth of entrancingly musical lines, many of which, if not absolutely meaningless, are nebulous and vague. The imagery and language of the poem are full of splendour. The central figure of Prometheus gathers round it an assemblage of aerial beings, as a mountain-top draws round it the phantom mists, and on them is poured the radiance of a subtle and most delicate fancy. Everything gross and mundane seems excluded. It is an Indian vale where Asia watches and weeps, and on the quivering limbs of Prometheus the icy cliffs of the Caucasus look down, but it is the Indian vale and the icy cliffs of a vision. Vividly we see the glories of dawn and of sunset, and cedars and mountain lawns, snow chasms and far-off seas, but it is in the luminous setting of a vivid dream. We are in an enchanted atmosphere, and all around us are spirit voices; ethereal forms gleam upon our sight, and we hear the rush of wings and fairy chariots. But when the final scene has been enacted and the happy consummation has been reached, the inevitable disillusioning ensues. The vision has dissolved, and left—what? A sensation of extinguished brightness, and a confused recollection of spaces traversed in a world invisible to the waking sense.

At Florence, in a wood by the Arno, one stormy day in autumn, was conceived the "Ode to the West Wind." This year 1819, which saw the production

of "Prometheus Unbound," was a marvellously fertile one in Shelley's life. In it he wrote "The Cenci," which has been lauded by some as the greatest drama since Shakespeare. The narrative is one of revolting crime with its terrible sequel, and the force of human interest in it is all the more striking because so rare in Shelley's poetry. The power and the passion in some of the pages are startling. But "The Cenci" has been fairly criticised as offering, not a study of life and character, but a picture of superlative wickedness too unrelieved to be credible. Incarnate in Count Cenci we see monstrous desire of crime for crime's sake; in Beatrice, monstrous desire of vengeance for vengeance' sake. This singleness of temper, this absence of natural complexity of motive, is at once the strength and the defect of the play.

In 1820 was produced "The Witch of Atlas," a poem which may commend itself none the less because, in a happy phrase of Mr. Roden Noel, it is "an exquisite iridescence of the fancy, and no more." The subject does not require or admit of firmer treatment. In the glowing verses of this poem, Shelley revelled and ran riot among the phantasmagoria that his own subtle brain had evolved. We feel that he is exulting in the boundless freedom and the illimitable power of his Witch Queen. From her throne of star-spangled cloud-mist he looks down upon the world and sees all things in every land. He is beside her when impulse leads her to

> "climb
> The steepest ladder of the crudded rack
> Up to some beakèd cape of cloud sublime,
> And, like Arion on the dolphin's back,

Ride singing through the shoreless air. Oft time
Following the serpent lightning's winding track,
She ran upon the platforms of the wind,
And laughed to hear the fireballs roar behind."

The Witch of Atlas is but one more embodiment of Shelley's own desires; in this case, it is the desire to transcend the limitations of the human, to range at will through the wide universe, untrammelled, uncontrolled.

Early in this year, 1820, Shelley had removed to Pisa where he wrote "The Sensitive Plant," and also "The Cloud," with its charming union of scientific truth and primitive poetic feeling; and a little later during an evening stroll at Casa Ricci, the sunset song of a skylark inspired the most characteristic and best-known of all his lyrics. His romantic acquaintance with the lovely girl Emilia Viviani, whose harsh treatment had fired his indignation and pity, was the direct inspiration of "Epipsychidion." In her Shelley imagined he had found the embodiment of his ideal of beauty, "youth's vision thus made perfect." Nothing in all his descriptive poetry surpasses that picture of the Ionian isle of rest and refuge, to which he fain would fly, and lead there an idyllic life as of the Golden Age, far from strife and every evil thing.

In the spring of 1821, the admirable "Defence of Poetry" (the best example of Shelley's prose) was written, but it remained unfinished. At this season, also, the untimely death of Keats, at Rome, prompted the elegy of "Adonais," wherein lament for the dead singer and indignation at his detractors find stately and classical expression. But its chief value, apart from metrical beauty, is the exposition

it contains of Shelley's own Pantheistic beliefs and hopes. The sublime note of triumph over mortality and the grave, that rings through certain of the stanzas, is, in its lofty assurance, comparable only to the cry of splendid confidence wherewith the Christian apostle asserted that Death was swallowed up in Victory. Here also the old spirit of world-weariness constrains him to envy his fellow who had "outsoared the shadow of our night" with its envy and unrest, its calumny and pain. He yearns for the realities upon which Keats had already entered, and to which he himself, only a year later, was to be hurried amid the wild uproar of a sunset storm.

With the political uprising of the Greeks Shelley showed his eager sympathy in the drama of "Hellas." His last literary work was "The Triumph of Life," a fragment of magnificent promise.

Early in 1822, a new figure appeared in the circle of Shelley's friends at Pisa. This was Captain Trelawny, the very sound of whose name recalls the closing scenes in Shelley's life. That summer they were both engrossed with the idea of a new-fashioned yacht, and when it was built Shelley spent much of his time in it. On the 8th of July he and his friend Williams set out from Leghorn, whither they had gone on business. Heedless of the threatening weather they put to sea. A fearful tempest burst ere long, and the boat went down. The bodies were washed up many days after, and that of Shelley (the local laws being imperative) was consumed by fire, in the presence of Byron, Leigh Hunt, and others, on the spot where it had been hastily interred. The ashes were laid in the Protestant cemetery at Rome, but the heart, snatched

by Trelawny from the flames, is preserved at Boscombe Manor, in England.

As we look back upon Shelley's life, there are certain dominant factors ruling its course which deserve attention. In the first place, the circumstances of his birth. If it is a misfortune for a poet to be born with an uncongenial environment, Shelley was indeed unfortunate. The earthly parentage of genius is often incomprehensible, but surely it was the veriest whim of fate which assigned that child to the household at Field Place. It made him, who was to be the hater of tradition, the heir by primogeniture to a quarter of a million of money; it placed him, the despiser of conventional forms, in the conservative squirearchy of conservative England; it sent him to college where he ran counter to established rules and ways of thought; it introduced him, the idealistic poet of democracy, to monarchy as represented by a king on the verge of insanity, and a tailor-made prince of dissolute morals; it decreed that he should come into the world when the brightness of "that dawn" which Wordsworth had rejoiced in was beginning to veil itself in tempest; and it opened his lips on behalf of liberty and the rights of man at a time when the old dreams of cosmopolite peace had shrunk and hardened into the stern reality of patriotism, and when the doctrines of '89 inspired nothing but suspicion and distrust.

Shelley belongs to the "dawn," though his advent was under a clouded and forbidding sky. The spirit of the eighteenth century was practically dead, and the great revolutionary movement in thought was inevitable, but its political embodiment

had suffered an eclipse. In those dark hours, many of its advocates had renounced their faith, but Shelley and Byron still made themselves heard on its behalf. Even more inflexible was the philosopher Godwin, whose influence on the former of the two poets was most potent. Indeed, Professor Dowden goes so far as to say that every leading idea in Shelley's earlier writings has its counterpart in the pages of "Political Justice." The older man, living in a world of ideas, had remained unshaken by the "red ruin" which, across the Channel, had accompanied "the breaking up of laws." And Shelley, a late-born child of the revolution and the representative of its original spirit and purest purpose, resembled him in this respect. Facts to him were of little account; they were mere pegs to hang ideas upon. Hateful to him was the study of "that record of crimes and miseries, history;" hence the old customs and traditions, which were fascinating and inspiring Scott, had no interest for Shelley. His gaze was towards the future, occupied with "visions of humanity made perfect" and a Europe bound together in golden bonds of liberty and love.

Little wonder, then, that with the exception of a few select friends he stood in spiritual isolation. In his own peculiar sense, he was in the world but not *of* the world. It was this that made the thirty years of his life so strained, restless, and erratic. His intense imagination lifted him into a region of ideal hopes and designs, but his equally intense sympathy with the woes and wrongs of his fellow-men was constantly drawing him down to the sober realism of earthly and every-day life. To be drawn down thus was usually synonymous with conflict

—conflict with prevailing laws and opinions, conflict with unimaginative minds who held by those laws, conflict with authority in religion, in politics, in social economy. Lofty imagination was his, at the expense of that sober common-sense which would have saved him from many errors and much suffering.

How far these ill results were due to circumstance, is a question. Wise discipline was never his. Moreover, his early personal experience of the world was unfortunate. Born in the purple, like Byron, he saw and despised, as Byron did, the shams and tyrannies, the falseness and corruption which pervaded society. But the gloomy raillery of the latter was like the lurid glow of a volcano, the indignation of the former like the white sword of the lightning; the one sprang from the nether fires of remorse and cynical distrust, the other flashed sky-born and scathing from the height of a poet's "scorn of scorn." But Byron was a satirist of society, Shelley aimed at being a reformer of it. He had all the enthusiasm for the office; his hopefulness and his belief in the inherent goodness of humanity were alike inexhaustible. For contemporary politics he had no patience. He looked forward to the day when the party walls even of nationality should be broken down, and man as man should stand forth

> "Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
> Equal, unclassed, tribeless and nationless,
> Exempt from awe, worship, degree; the King
> Over himself, just, gentle, wise."

About Shelley's aspiration and endeavour, there was a feverish eagerness. He brooked no hindrance that was surmountable, even if the step involved

disaster to himself or to others; and consistency was frequently over-ridden as he pressed toward the goal. He believed himself to be guided ever by principle, but he was practically a law unto himself. The sense of duty was replaced by transient impulse. It has been said that *conscience* was wanting in Shelley; that is to say, the existence of a higher and a lower will at war within the soul was not admitted nor even realised by him. That mysterious dualism of the heart, our knowledge of which comes from a Hebrew source, seems to have been entirely absent in Shelley. In this respect he approximates rather to the Greek genius. The pressure of moral responsibility he can scarcely have felt, for in external authority he had no belief. He resented dogma of any sort, and took early occasion to ventilate his hostility.

Some one has said, Whoever prohibits doubt starts an inquiry. What an inquiry was thus provoked in the breast of Shelley! He burned to search into every sphere of knowledge. Nothing was too high for him to seek to attain unto, nothing was too sacred for him to uplift the veil. He faced wide-eyed the deepest problems of our existence, his lids never drooped with reverence before any mystery. His gaze on such was as the gaze of

"Callow eagles, at their first sunrise,"

the gaze of wonderment rather than of awe. The inherent infirmities and shortcomings of mortal man he never realised, he merely chafed at man's limitations, which he felt only too keenly.

Ever straining forward towards an ideal which was beyond the realisation of all but the few, he had not the patience requisite for that calm reflective

discrimination with which Dante and Shakespeare surveyed the world in which they moved. Shelley, with all his enthusiasm for humanity, had but little knowledge of men. Consequently, with the exception of "The Cenci," his poems are wanting in human interest; take the various characters from their setting in the narrative, and at once they become impalpable and unsubstantial. Shelley prefers personifications to persons. These shadowy abstractions, however, become interesting when we see exemplified in them Shelley's own moods, and dreams, and longings. In Alastor, gentle, wistful, unsatisfied, he is in pursuit of the ideal which he can never reach—a spiritual Narcissus, languishing for love of that elusive image which is really the reflection of his own pure soul. In Laon ("Revolt of Islam") he calls upon the world to abjure the sway of tyrants, to clasp hands in pledge of brotherhood, and thus to inaugurate the new era of universal amity and peace. In Prometheus, he flings defiance at enthroned injustice, and submits to present suffering with eyes fixed on the far-seen dawn of deliverance and restitution. For producing character-studies the pen of Shelley had little or no aptitude, and less inclination. Self-control, in which as a man he was so conspicuously wanting, is requisite to that art. To discern character, the poet's eye must have other power than that of glancing from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven. In a modest letter to Godwin, Shelley owns himself wanting in "that tranquillity which is the attribute and accompaniment of power." The sense of humour, also, which is so helpful in such portrayal, was absent in him; his nature was too intense, and humour distracts,

relaxes, and diverts. Indeed, he is said to have remarked to Hogg that there could be "no entire regeneration of mankind till laughter was put down." Fortunately, in his writings, he aimed but rarely at the humorous; his one experiment, as shown in the mad mirth of "Œdipus Tyrannus," makes us thankful that it was not repeated.

The case of Shelley is just the reverse of that of Antæus in the old fable. The strength of the wrestling giant is said to have been renewed every time he was thrown to the ground: whereas to Shelley the divine quickening comes when his feet are loosened from the earth. His right sphere is the clear heaven of his own vivid imagination. When he speaks from thence his words are golden. Thus it is as a lyric poet, and the king of English lyric poets, that we should regard him. That "fine phrenzy," which was such an embarrassment to him in his dealings with the world—exemplified now in revolt and protest almost hysterical, now in mysterious hallucinations bordering on the ludicrous—was the very wind on which his genius spread wide wings. Upon it he rose to heights where few have borne him company. Indeed, no prescribed height contents him; the wing-beats of his aspiration continue without final pause; like his own skylark, singing he ever soars, and soaring he ever sings, until he is almost "hidden in the light" of his own transcendent thought. Not that he always resembles that "blithe spirit" in its blitheness; too often he carries up the sorrow-dews of earth upon his wings, and his very yearning becomes pain. He longs to be "made one with Nature;" sometimes it is through the kindred feeling of restlessness, sometimes through the

sympathy of suffering. To "the steep sky's commotion" and the sad falling of the leaves his heart responds; he cries to the wild West Wind to bear him up and away in its mad "wanderings over heaven;" he languishes for the coming of the Spirit of Night; he revels in the Protean changefulness of the Cloud.

Such was Percy Bysshe Shelley—one of the most fascinating figures in the history of English letters, and the wide influence of whose character and intellectual example has, perhaps, scarcely yet been realised. Essentially a poet's poet, let the words of one of our newest singers, Mr. William Watson, round off this attempted presentation of

> "His story who pre-eminently of men
> Seemed nourished upon star-beams and the stuff
> Of rainbows, and the tempest, and the foam;
> Who scarcely brooked on his impatient soul
> The fleshly trammels; whom at last the sea
> Gave to the fire, from whose wild arms the winds
> Took him, and shook him broadcast to the world."

HORACE G. GROSER.

HYMN TO INTELLECTUAL BEAUTY.

1818.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I.

THE awful shadow of some unseen Power
Floats tho' unseen amongst us,—visiting
This various world with as inconstant wing
As summer winds that creep from flower to flower,—
Like moonbeams that behind some piny mountain shower,
It visits with inconstant glance
Each human heart and countenance;
Like hues and harmonies of evening,—
Like clouds in starlight widely spread,—
Like memory of music fled,—
Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear, and yet dearer for its mystery.

II.

Spirit of BEAUTY, that dost consecrate
With thine own hues all thou dost shine upon
Of human thought or form,—where art thou gone?
Why dost thou pass away and leave our state,
This dim vast vale of tears, vacant and desolate?
Ask why the sunlight not for ever
Weaves rainbows o'er yon mountain river,
Why aught should fail and fade that once is shewn,
Why fear and dream and death and birth
Cast on the daylight of this earth
Such gloom,—why man has such a scope
For love and hate, despondency and hope?

III.

No voice from some sublimer world hath ever
To sage or poet these responses given—
Therefore the names of Demon, Ghost, and Heaven,
Remain the records of their vain endeavour,
Frail spells—whose uttered charm might not avail to sever,
From all we hear and all we see,
Doubt, chance, and mutability.
Thy light alone—like mist o'er mountains driven,
Or music by the night wind sent,
Thro' strings of some still instrument,
Or moonlight on a midnight stream,
Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream.

IV.

Love, Hope, and Self-esteem, like clouds depart
And come, for some uncertain moments lent,
Man were immortal, and omnipotent,
Didst thou, unknown and awful as thou art,
Keep with thy glorious train firm state within his heart.
Thou messenger of sympathies,
That wax and wane in lovers' eyes—
Thou—that to human thought art nourishment,
Like darkness to a dying flame!
Depart not as thy shadow came,
Depart not—lest the grave should be,
Like life and fear, a dark reality.

V.

While yet a boy I sought for ghosts, and sped
Thro' many a listening chamber, cave and ruin,
And starlight wood, with fearful steps pursuing
Hopes of high talk with the departed dead.
I called on poisonous names with which our youth is fed;

I was not heard—I saw them not—
When musing deeply on the lot
Of life, at the sweet time when winds are wooing
All vital things that wake to bring
News of birds and blossoming,—
Sudden, thy shadow fell on me;
I shrieked, and clasped my hands in ecstasy!

VI.

I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
To thee and thine—have I not kept the vow?
With beating heart and streaming eyes, even now
I call the phantoms of a thousand hours
Each from his voiceless grave: they have in visioned bowe
Of studious zeal or love's delight
Outwatched with me the envious night—
They know that never joy illumed my brow
Unlinked with hope that thou wouldst free
This world from its dark slavery,
That thou—O awful LOVELINESS,
Wouldst give whate'er these words cannot express.

VII.

The day becomes more solemn and serene
When noon is past—there is a harmony
In autumn, and a lustre in its sky,
Which thro' the summer is not heard or seen,
As if it could not be, as if it had not been!
Thus let thy power, which like the truth
Of nature on my passive youth
Descended, to my onward life supply
Its calm—to one who worships thee,
And every form containing thee,
Whom, SPIRIT fair, thy spells did bind
To fear himself, and love all human kind.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN DEJECTION, NEAR NAPLES.

1818.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I.

THE sun is warm, the sky is clear,
The waves are dancing fast and bright,
Blue isles and snowy mountains wear
The purple noon's transparent might,
The breath of the moist earth is light,
Around its unexpanded buds;
Like many a voice of one delight,
The winds, the birds, the ocean floods,
The City's voice itself is soft, like Solitude's.

II.

I see the Deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple seaweeds strown;
I see the waves upon the shore,
Like light dissolved in star-showers, thrown:
I sit upon the sands alone,
The lightning of the noon-tide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion,
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion.

III.

Alas! I have nor hope nor health,
Nor peace within nor calm around,
Nor that content surpassing wealth
The sage in meditation found,
And walked with inward glory crowned—
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure.
Others I see whom these surround—
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;—
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

IV.

Yet now despair itself is mild,
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne and yet must bear,
Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

V.

Some might lament that I were cold,
As I, when this sweet day is gone,
Which my lost heart, too soon grown old,
Insults with this untimely moan;
They might lament—for I am one
Whom men love not,—and yet regret,
Unlike this day, which, when the sun
Shall on its stainless glory set,
Will linger, though enjoyed, like joy in memory yet.

INDIAN SERENADE.

1819.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I.

I ARISE from dreams of thee
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright:
I arise from dreams of thee,
And a spirit in my feet
Hath led me—who knows how!
To thy chamber window, Sweet!

II.

The wandering airs they faint
On the dark, the silent stream—
And the Champak's odours fail
Like sweet thoughts in a dream;
The nightingale's complaint,
It dies upon her heart;—
As I must on thine,
O! belovèd as thou art!

III.

O lift me from the grass!
I die! I faint! I fail!
Let thy love in kisses rain
On my lips and eyelids pale.
My cheek is cold and white, alas!
My heart beats loud and fast;—
Oh! press it to thine own again,
Where it will break at last.

ODE TO THE WEST WIND.

1819.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I.

O, WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O, thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving every where;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, O, hear!

II.

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: O, hear!

III.

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystàlline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers
So sweet the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: O, hear!

IV.

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O, uncontroulable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision; I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

v.

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawakened earth

The trumphet of a prophecy! O, wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

THE CLOUD.

1820.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noon-day dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers,
Lightning my pilot sits,
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits;
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,

Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The Spirit he loves remains ;
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning star shines dead,
As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardours of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn ;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer ;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanos are dim, and the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-coloured bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colours wove,
While the moist earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky;
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain when with never a stain,
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams, with their convex gleams,
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

TO A SKYLARK.

1820.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

HAIL to thee, blithe spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightening
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad day-light
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue,
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingèd thieves:

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymenæal,
Or triumphal chaunt,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

HYMN OF PAN.

1820.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I.

FROM the forests and highlands
We come, we come;
From the river-girt islands,
Where loud waves are dumb
Listening to my sweet pipings.
The wind in the reeds and the rushes,
The bees on the bells of thyme,
The birds on the myrtle bushes,
The cicale above in the lime,
And the lizards below in the grass,
Were as silent as ever old Tmolus was,
Listening to my sweet pipings.

II.

Liquid Peneus was flowing,
And all dark Tempe lay
In Pelion's shadow, outgrowing
The light of the dying day,
Speeded by my sweet pipings.
The Sileni, and Sylvans, and Fauns,
And the Nymphs of the woods and waves,
To the edge of the moist river-lawns,
And the brink of the dewy caves,
And all that did then attend and follow
Were silent with love, as you now, Apollo,
With envy of my sweet pipings.

III.

I sang of the dancing stars,
I sang of the dædal Earth,
And of Heaven—and the giant wars,
And Love, and Death, and Birth,—
And then I changed my pipings,—
Singing how down the vale of Menalus
I pursued a maiden and clasped a reed:
Gods and men, we are all deluded thus!
It breaks in our bosom and then we bleed:
All wept, as I think both ye now would,
If envy or age had not frozen your blood,
At the sorrow of my sweet pipings.

EPIPSYCHIDION.

1820.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

THE INVITATION.

These lines were addressed to Lady Emilia Viviani who was imprisoned in the Convent of St. Anne, Pisa.

Spouse! Sister! Angel! Pilot of the Fate
Whose course has been so starless! O too late
Belovèd! O too soon adored, by me!
For in the fields of immortality
My spirit should at first have worshipped thine,
A divine presence in a place divine;
Or should have moved beside it on this earth,
A shadow of that substance, from its birth;
But not as now:—I love thee; yes, I feel
That on the fountain of my heart a seal
Is set, to keep its waters pure and bright
For thee, since in those *tears* thou hast delight.
We—are we not formed, as notes of music are,
For one another, though dissimilar;
Such difference without discord, as can make
Those sweetest sounds in which all spirits shake
As trembling leaves in a continuous air?

Thy wisdom speaks in me, and bids me dare
Beacon the rocks on which high hearts are wreckt.
I never was attached to that great sect,
Whose doctrine is, that each one should select

Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend,
And all the rest, though fair and wise, commend
To cold oblivion, though it is in the code
Of modern morals, and the beaten road
Which those poor slaves with weary footsteps tread,
Who travel to their home among the dead
By the broad highway of the world, and so
With one chained friend, perhaps a jealous foe,
The dreariest and the longest journey go.

True love in this differs from gold and clay,
That to divide is not to take away.
Love is like understanding, that grows bright,
Gazing on many truths; 'tis like thy light,
Imagination! which from earth and sky,
And from the depths of human phantasy,
As from a thousand prisms and mirrors, fills
The Universe with glorious beams, and kills
Error, the worm, with many a sun-like arrow
Of its reverberated lightning. Narrow
The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates,
The life that wears, the spirit that creates
One object, and one form, and builds thereby
A sepulchre for its eternity.

Mind from its object differs most in this:
Evil from good; misery from happiness;
The baser from the nobler; the impure
And frail, from what is clear and must endure.
If you divide suffering and dross, you may
Diminish till it is consumed away;
If you divide pleasure and love and thought,
Each part exceeds the whole; and we know not
How much, while any yet remains unshared,
Of pleasure may be gained, of sorrow spared

This truth is that deep well, whence sages draw
The unenvied light of hope; the eternal law
By which those live, to whom this world of life
Is as a garden ravaged, and whose strife
Tills for the promise of a later birth
The wilderness of this Elysian earth.

* * * * *

Lady mine,
Scorn not these flowers of thought, the fading birth
Which from its heart of hearts that plant puts forth
Whose fruit, made perfect by thy sunny eyes,
Will be as of the trees of Paradise.
The day is come, and thou wilt fly with me.
To whatsoe'er of dull mortality
Is mine, remain a vestal sister still;
To the intense, the deep, the imperishable,
Not mine but me,—henceforth be thou united
Even as a bride, delighting and delighted.
The hour is come:—the destined Star has risen
Which shall descend upon a vacant prison.
The walls are high, the gates are strong, thick set
The sentinels—but true love never yet
Was thus constrained: it overleaps all fence:
Like lightning, with invisible violence
Piercing its continents; like heaven's free breath,
Which he who grasps can hold not; liker Death,
Who rides upon a thought, and makes his way
Through temple, tower, and palace, and the array
Of arms: more strength has Love than he or they;
For it can burst his charnel, and make free
The limbs in chains, the heart in agony,
The soul in dust and chaos.

Emily,
A ship is floating in the harbour now,
A wind is hovering o'er the mountain's brow;
There is a path on the sea's azure floor,
No keel has ever ploughed that path before;
The halcyons brood around the foamless isles;
The treacherous ocean has foresworn its wiles;
The merry mariners are bold and free:
Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail with me?
Our bark is as an albatross, whose nest
Is a far Eden of the purple East;
And we between her wings will sit, while Night
And Day, and Storm, and Calm, pursue their flight,
Our ministers, along the boundless Sea,
Treading each other's heels, unheededly.
It is an isle under Ionian skies,
Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise,
And, for the harbours are not safe and good,
This land would have remained a solitude
But for some pastoral people native there,
Who from the Elysian, clear, and golden air
Draw the last spirit of the age of gold,
Simple and spirited; innocent and bold.
The blue Ægean girds this chosen home,
With ever-changing sound and light and foam,
Kissing the sifted sands, and caverns hoar;
And all the winds wandering along the shore
Undulate with the undulating tide:
There are thick woods where sylvan forms abide;
And many a fountain, rivulet, and pond,
As clear as elemental diamond,
Or serene morning air; and far beyond,
The mossy tracks made by the goats and deer
(Which the rough shepherd treads but once a year,)

Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers, and halls
Built round with ivy, which the waterfalls
Illumining, with sound that never fails
Accompany the noon-day nightingales;
And all the place is peopled with sweet airs;
The light clear element which the isle wears
Is heavy with the scent of lemon-flowers,
Which floats like mist laden with unseen showers
And falls upon the eyelids like faint sleep;
And from the moss violets and jonquils peep,
And dart their arrowy odour through the brain
Till you might faint with that delicious pain.
And every motion, odour, beam, and tone,
With that deep music is in unison:
Which is a soul within the soul—they seem
Like echoes of an antenatal dream.—
It is an isle 'twixt Heaven, Air, Earth, and Sea,
Cradled, and hung in clear tranquillity;
Bright as that wandering Eden Lucifer,
Washed by the soft blue oceans of young air.
It is a favoured place. Famine or Blight,
Pestilence, War and Earthquake, never light
Upon its mountain-peaks; blind vultures, they
Sail onward far upon their fatal way:
The winged storms, chaunting their thunder-psalm
To other lands, leave azure chasms of calm
Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,
From which its fields and woods ever renew
Their green and golden immortality.
And from the sea there rise, and from the sky
There fall, clear exhalations, soft and bright,
Veil after veil, each hiding some delight,
Which Sun or Moon or zephyr draw aside,
Till the isle's beauty, like a naked bride

Glowing at once with love and loveliness,
Blushes and trembles at its own excess:
Yet, like a buried lamp, a Soul no less
Burns in the heart of this delicious isle,
An atom of th' Eternal, whose own smile
Unfolds itself, and may be felt, not seen
O'er the grey rocks, blue waves, and forests green,
Filling their bare and void interstices.—
But the chief marvel of the wilderness
Is a lone dwelling, built by whom or how
None of the rustic island-people know:
Tis not a tower of strength, though with its height
It overtops the woods; but, for delight,
Some wise and tender Ocean-King, ere crime
Had been invented, in the world's young prime,
Reared it, a wonder of that simple time,
And envy of the isles, a pleasure-house
Made sacred to his sister and his spouse.
It scarce seems now a wreck of human art,
But, as it were, Titantic; in the heart
Of earth having assumed its form, then grown
Out of the mountains, from the living stone,
Lifting itself in caverns light and high:
For all the antique and learnèd imagery
Has been erased, and in the place of it
The ivy and the wild-vine interknit
The volumes of their many-twining stems;
Parasite flowers illume with dewy gems
The lampless halls, and when they fade, the sky
Peeps through their winter-woof of tracery
With Moon-light patches, or star atoms keen,
Or fragments of the day's intense serene;—
Working mosaic on their Parian floors.
And, day and night, aloof, from the high towers

And terraces, the Earth and Ocean seem
To sleep in one another's arms, and dream
Of waves, flowers, clouds, woods, rocks, and all that we
Read in their smiles, and call reality.

This isle and house are mine, and I have vowed
Thee to be lady of the solitude.—
And I have fitted up some chambers there
Looking towards the golden Eastern air,
And level with the living winds which flow
Like waves above the living waves below.—
I have sent books and music there, and all
Those instruments with which high spirits call
The future from its cradle, and the past
Out of its grave, and make the present last
In thoughts and joys which sleep but cannot die,
Folded within their own eternity.
Our simple life wants little, and true taste
Hires not the pale drudge Luxury, to waste
The scene it would adorn, and therefore still,
Nature with all her children haunts the hill.
The ring-dove, in the embowering ivy, yet
Keeps up her love-lament, and the owls flit
Round the evening tower, and the young stars glance
Between the quick bats in their twilight dance;
The spotted deer bask in the fresh moon-light
Before our gate, and the slow silent night
Is measured by the pants of their calm sleep.
Be this our home in life, and when years heap
Their withered hours, like leaves, on our decay,
Let us become the overhanging day,
The living soul, of this Elysian isle,
Conscious, inseparable, one. Meanwhile
We two will rise, and sit, and walk together,

Under the roof of blue Ionian weather,
And wander in the meadows, or ascend
The mossy mountains, where the blue heavens bend
With lightest winds, to touch their paramour;
Or linger, where the pebble-paven shore,
Under the quick, faint kisses of the sea
Trembles and sparkles as with ecstasy,—
Possessing and possest by all that is
Within that calm circumference of bliss,
And by each other, till to love and live
Be one:—

* * * * *

We shall become the same, we shall be one
Spirit within two frames, oh! wherefore two?
One passion in twin-hearts, which grows and grew,
Till, like two meteors of expanding flame,
Those spheres instinct with it become the same,
Touch, mingle, are transfigured; ever still
Burning, yet ever inconsumable:
In one another's substance finding food,
Like flames too pure and light and unimbued
To nourish their bright lives with baser prey,
Which point to Heaven and cannot pass away:
One hope within two wills, one will beneath
Two overshadowing minds, one life, one death,
One Heaven, one Hell, one immortality,
And one annihilation. Woe is me!
The wingèd words on which my soul would pierce
Into the height of love's rare Universe,
Are chains of lead around its flight of fire.—
I pant, I sink, I tremble, I expire!

ADONAIS:

An Elegy on the Death of John Keats.

1821.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I.

I WEEP for Adonais—he is dead!
O, weep for Adonais! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head!
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow, say: with me
Died Adonais; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity!

II.

Where wert thou mighty Mother, when he lay,
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness? Where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died? With veilèd eyes,
'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies,
With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of death.

III.

O, weep for Adonais—he is dead!
Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone, where all things wise and fair
Descend;—oh, dream not that the amorous Deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our despair.

IV.

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania!—He died,
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride,
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth; the third among the sons of light.

V.

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Not all to that bright station dared to climb;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time
In which suns perished; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or God,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road,
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene abode.

VI.

But now, thy youngest, dearest one has perished,
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,
And fed with true love tears, instead of dew;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals nipt before they blew
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste;
The broken lily lies—the storm is overpast.

VII.

To that high Capital, where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came; and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal.—Come away!
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof! while still
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay;
Awake him not! surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

VIII.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace,
The shadow of white Death, and at the door
Invisible Corruption waits to trace
His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law
Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.

IX.

O, weep for Adonais!—The quick Dreams,
The passion-winged Ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not,—
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn their lot
Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

x.

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries;
"Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain."
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

xi.

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;
Another clipt her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,
Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and wingèd reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbèd fire against his frozen cheek.

xii.

Another Splendour on his mouth alit,
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music: the damp death
Quenched its caress upon his icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapour, which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and past to its eclipse.

XIII.

And others came . . . Desires and Adorations,
Wingèd Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering Incarnations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies;
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp might seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

XIV.

All he had loved, and moulded into thought,
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watchtower, and her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aërial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

XV.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds:—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

XVI.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou Adonais: wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odour, to sighing ruth.

XVII.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

XVIII.

Ah woe is me! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone;
The ants, the bees, the swallows, reappear;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons' bier;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere;
And the green lizard and the golden snake,
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

XIX.

Through wood and stream and field and hill and Ocean
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on Chaos ; in its steam immersed
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst;
Diffuse themselves ; and spend in love's delight,
The beauty and the joy of their renewèd might.

XX.

The leprous corpse touched by this spirit tender
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath ;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death
And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath ;
Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone which knows
Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning ?—th' intense atom glows
A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

XXI.

Alas ! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we ? of what scene
The actors or spectators ? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.
As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow.

XXII.

He will awake no more, oh, never more!
"Wake thou," cried Misery, "childless Mother, rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart's core,
A wound more fierce than his with tears and sighs."
And all the Dreams that watched Urania's eyes,
And all the Echoes whom their sister's song
Had held in holy silence, cried: "Arise!"
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendour sprung.

XXIII.

She rose like an Autumnal Night, that springs
Out of the East, and follows wild and drear
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,
Had left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so wrapt Urania;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

XXIV.

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone, and steel,
And human hearts, which to her aery tread
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:
And barbèd tongues, and thoughts more sharp than they
Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

XXV.

In the death-chamber for a moment Death
Shamed by the presence of that living Might
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and life's pale light
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear delight.
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress
Roused Death: Death rose and smiled, and met her vain caress.

XXVI.

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss shall all thoughts else survive,
With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art!
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart.

XXVII.

"Oh gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh where was then
Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like deer.

XXVIII.

"The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
The vultures to the conqueror's banner true
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,
When like Apollo, from his golden bow,
The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying low.

XXIX.

'The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again;
So is it in the world of living men:
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

XXX.

Thus ceased she: and the mountain shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent;
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow; from her wilds Irene sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And love taught grief to fall like music from his tongue.

XXXI.

'Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,
A phantom among men; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their prey.

XXXII.

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift—
A Love in desolation masked;—a Power
Girt round with weakness;—it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour;
It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow;—even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may break.

XXXIII.

His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

XXXIV.

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle band
Who in another's fate now wept his own;
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned
The Stranger's mien, and murmured: "Who art thou?"
He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's or Christ's—Oh! that it should be so!

XXXV.

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
In mockery of monumental stone,
The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed one;
Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

XXXVI.

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh!
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown:
It felt, yet could escape the magic tone
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung.

XXXVII.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow:
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as now.

XXXVIII.

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now.—
Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of shame.

XXXIX.

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life—
'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings.—*We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living clay.

XL.

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

XLI.

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;
Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on it's despair!

XLII.

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

XLIII.

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely: he doth bear
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there,
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks it's flight
To it's own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in it's beauty and it's might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

XLIV.

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb
And death is a low mist which cannot blot
The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

XLV.

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved:
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reproved.

XLVI.

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
"Thou art become as one of us," they cry,
"It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid an Heaven of Song.
Assume thy wingèd throne, thou Vesper of our throng!"

XLVII.

Who mourns for Adonais? oh come forth
Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth;
As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light
Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Satiate the void circumference: then shrink
Even to a point within our day and night;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the brink.

XLVIII.

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre
O, not of him, but of our joy: 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought;
For such as he can lend,—they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

XLIX.

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness;
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness
Pass, till the Spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead,
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread.

L.

And gray walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath,
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death
Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished breath.

LI.

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

LII.

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!
Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words, are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

LIII.

Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart?
Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!
A light is past from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whispers near;
'Tis Adonais calls! oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

LIV.

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst; now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

LV.

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and spherèd skies are riven!
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

TO ——.

1821.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I.

ONE word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

II.

I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the Heavens reject not,
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

TO NIGHT.

1821.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I.

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
Swift be thy flight!

II.

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long sought!

III.

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

IV.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noon-tide bee,
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?—And I replied,
No, not thee!

V.

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, belovèd Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight,
Come soon, soon!

SONG.

MEN OF ENGLAND.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

1819.

MEN of England, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay ye low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

Wherefore feed, and clothe, and save,
From the cradle to the grave,
Those ungrateful drones who would
Drain your sweat—nay, drink your blood?

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,
That these stingless drones may spoil
The forced produce of your toil?

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?
Or what is it ye buy so dear
With your pain and with your fear?

The seed ye sow, another reaps;
The wealth ye find, another keeps;
The robes ye weave, another wears;
The arms ye forge, another bears.

Sow seed,—but let no tyrant reap;
Find wealth,—let no impostor heap;
Weave robes,—let not the idle wear;
Forge arms,—in your defence to bear.

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells;
In halls ye deck another dwells.
Why shake the chains ye wrought? Ye see
The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

With plough and spade, and hoe and loom,
Trace your grave, and build your tomb,
And weave your winding sheet, till fair
England be your sepulchre.

PROMETHEUS UNBOUND.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I.

PROMETHEUS DEFYING JUPITER.

(FROM ACT I.)

SCENE.—*A Ravine of Icy Rocks in the Indian Caucasus.* PROMETHEUS *is discovered bound to the Precipice.* PANTHEA *and* IONE *are seated at his feet. Time, Night.*

PROMETHEUS.

MONARCH of Gods and Dæmons, and all Spirits
But One, who throng those bright and rolling worlds
Which Thou and I alone of living things
Behold with sleepless eyes! regard this Earth
Made multitudinous with thy slaves, whom thou
Requitest for knee-worship, prayer, and praise,
And toil, and hecatombs of broken hearts,
With fear and self-contempt and barren hope.
Whilst me, who am thy foe, eyeless in hate,
Hast thou made reign and triumph, to thy scorn
O'er mine own misery and thy vain revenge.
Three thousand years of sleep-unsheltered hours,
And moments aye divided by keen pangs
Till they seemed years, torture and solitude,
Scorn and despair,—these are mine empire.
More glorious far than that which thou surveyest
From thine unenvied throne, O, Mighty God!

Almighty, had I deigned to share the shame
Of thine ill tyranny, and hung not here
Nailed to this wall of eagle-baffling mountain
Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured; without herb,
Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of life.
Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!

No change, no pause, no hope! Yet I endure.
I ask the Earth, have not the mountains felt?
I ask yon Heaven, the all-beholding Sun,
Has it not seen? The Sea, in storm or calm,
Heaven's ever-changing Shadow, spread below,
Have its deaf waves not heard my agony?
Ah me! alas, pain, pain ever, for ever!

The crawling glaciers pierce me with the spears
Of their moon-freezing crystals, the bright chains
Eat with their burning cold into my bones.
Heaven's wingèd hound, polluting from thy lips
His beak in poison not his own, tears up
My heart; and shapeless sights come wandering by,
The ghastly people of the realm of dream,
Mocking me: and the Earthquake-fiends are charged
To wrench the rivets from my quivering wounds
When the rocks split and close again behind:
While from their loud abysses howling throng
The genii of the storm, urging the rage
Of whirlwind, and afflict me with keen hail.
And yet to me welcome is day and night,
Whether one breaks the hoar frost of the morn,
Or starry, dim, and slow, the other climbs
The leaden-coloured east; for then they lead
The wingless, crawling hours, one among whom
—As some dark Priest hales the reluctant victim—

Shall drag thee, cruel King, to kiss the blood
From these pale feet, which then might trample thee
If they disdained not such a prostrate slave.

II.

THE GIFTS OF PROMETHEUS TO MANKIND.

(FROM ACT II., SCENE IV.)

ASIA.

——THERE was the Heaven and Earth at first,
And Light and Love; then Saturn, from whose throne
Time fell, an envious shadow: such the state
Of the earth's primal spirits beneath his sway,
As the calm joy of flowers and living leaves
Before the wind or sun has withered them
And semivital worms; but he refused
The birthright of their being, knowledge, power,
The skill which wields the elements, the thought
Which pierces this dim universe like light,
Self-empire, and the majesty of love;
For thirst of which they fainted. Then Prometheus
Gave wisdom, which is strength, to Jupiter,
And with this law alone, "Let man be free,"
Clothed him with the dominion of wide Heaven.
To know nor faith, nor love, nor law; to be
Omnipotent but friendless is to reign;
And Jove now reigned; for on the race of man
First famine, and then toil, and then disease,
Strife, wounds, and ghastly death unseen before,
Fell; and the unseasonable seasons drove
With alternating shafts of frost and fire,
Their shelterless, pale tribes to mountain caves:

And in their desert hearts fierce wants he sent,
And mad disquietudes, and shadows idle
Of unreal good, which levied mutual war,
So ruining the lair wherein they raged.
Prometheus saw, and waked the legioned hopes
Which sleep within folded Elysian flowers,
Nepenthe, Moly, Amaranth, fadeless blooms,
That they might hide with thin and rainbow wings
The shape of Death; and Love he sent to bind
The disunited tendrils of that vine
Which bears the wine of life, the human heart;
And he tamed fire which, like some beast of prey,
Most terrible, but lovely, played beneath
The frown of man; and tortured to his will
Iron and gold, the slaves and signs of power,
And gems and poisons, and all subtlest forms
Hidden beneath the mountains and the waves.
He gave man speech, and speech created thought,
Which is the measure of the universe;
And Science struck the thrones of earth and heaven,
Which shook, but fell not; and the harmonious mind
Poured itself forth in all-prophetic song;
And music lifted up the listening spirit
Until it walked, exempt from mortal care,
Godlike, o'er the clear billows of sweet sound;
And human hands first mimicked and then mocked,
With moulded limbs more lovely than its own,
The human form, till marble grew divine;
And mothers, gazing, drank the love men see
Reflected in their race, behold, and perish.
He told the hidden power of herbs and springs,
And Disease drank and slept. Death grew like sleep.
He taught the implicated orbits woven
Of the wide-wandering stars; and how the sun

Changes his lair, and by what secret spell
The pale moon is transformed, when her broad eye
Gazes not on the interlunar sea:
He taught to rule, as life directs the limbs,
The tempest-wingèd chariots of the Ocean,
And the Celt knew the Indian. Cities then
Were built, and through their snow-like columns flowed
The warm winds, and the azure æther shone,
And the blue sea and shadowy hills were seen.
Such, the alleviations of his state,
Prometheus gave to man, for which he hangs
Withering in destined pain.

III.

ASIA'S SONG.

(FROM ACT II., SCENE V.)

My soul is an enchanted boat,
Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float
Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing;
And thine doth like an angel sit
Beside a helm conducting it,
Whilst all the winds with melody are ringing.
It seems to float ever, for ever,
Upon that many-winding river,
Between mountains, woods, abysses,
A paradise of wildernesses!
Till, like one in slumber bound,
Borne to the ocean, I float down, around,
Into a sea profound, of ever-spreading sound:

Meanwhile thy spirit lifts its pinions
In music's most serene dominions;
Catching the winds that fan that happy heaven.
And we sail on, away, afar,
Without a course, without a star,
But, by the instinct of sweet music driven;
Till through Elysian garden islets
By thee, most beautiful of pilots,
Where never mortal pinnace glided,
The boat of my desire is guided:
Realms where the air we breathe is love,
Which in the winds and on the waves doth move,
Harmonizing this earth with what we feel above.

We have passed Age's icy caves,
And Manhood's dark and tossing waves,
And Youth's smooth ocean, smiling to betray:
Beyond the glassy gulphs we flee
Of shadow-peopled Infancy,
Through Death and Birth, to a diviner day;
A paradise of vaulted bowers,
Lit by downward-gazing flowers,
And watery paths that wind between
Wildernesses calm and green,
Peopled by shapes too bright to see,
And rest, having beheld; somewhat like thee;
Which walk upon the sea, and chaunt melodiously!

IV.

THE FALL OF JUPITER.

(FROM ACT III., SCENE II.)

The Mouth of a great River in the Island Atlantis. OCEAN *is discovered reclining near the Shore;* APOLLO *stands beside him.*

Ocean. He fell, thou sayest, beneath his conqueror's frown?

Apollo. Aye, when the strife was ended, which made dim
The orb I rule, and shook the solid stars,
The terrors of his eye illumined heaven
With sanguine light, through the thick ragged skirts
Of the victorious darkness, as he fell:
Like the last glare of day's red agony,
Which, from a rent among the fiery clouds,
Burns far along the tempest-wrinkled deep.

Ocean. He sunk to the abyss? To the dark void?

Apollo. An eagle so caught in some bursting cloud
On Caucasus, his thunder-baffled wings
Entangled in the whirlwind, and his eyes
Which gazed on the undazzling sun, now blinded
By the white lightning, while the ponderous hail
Beats on his struggling form, which sinks at length
Prone, and the aërial ice clings over it.

Ocean. Henceforth the fields of Heaven-reflecting sea
Which are my realm, will heave, unstained with blood,
Beneath the uplifting winds, like plains of corn
Swayed by the summer air; my streams will flow
Round many-peopled continents, and round
Fortunate isles; and from their glassy thrones

Blue Proteus and his humid nymphs shall mark
The shadow of fair ships, as mortals see
The floating bark of the light-laden moon
With that white star, its sightless pilot's crest,
Borne down the rapid sunset's ebbing sea;
Tracking their path no more by blood and groans,
And desolation, and the mingled voice
Of slavery and command; but by the light
Of wave-reflected flowers, and floating odours,
And music soft, and mild, free, gentle voices,
And sweetest music, such as spirits love.

Apollo. And I shall gaze not on the deeds which make
My mind obscure with sorrow, as eclipse
Darkens the sphere I guide; but list, I hear
The small, clear, silver lute of the young Spirit
That sits i' the morning star.

Ocean. Thou must away;
Thy steeds will pause at even, till when farewell:
The loud deep calls me home even now to feed it
With azure calm out of the emerald urns
Which stand for ever full beside my throne.
Behold the Nereids under the green sea,
Their wavering limbs borne on the wind-like stream,
Their white arms lifted o'er their streaming hair
With garlands pied and starry sea-flower crowns,
Hastening to grace their mighty sister's joy.

[*A sound of waves is heard.*

It is the unpastured sea hungering for calm.
Peace, monster; I come now. Farewell.

Apollo. Farewell.

THE CENCI.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

I.

THE SPEECH OF BEATRICE.

(FROM ACT V.)

SCENE III.—*The Cell of a Prison.*

BEATRICE *is discovered asleep on a Couch. Enter* BERNARDO.

Ber. How gently slumber rests upon her face
Like the last thoughts of some day sweetly spent
Closing in night and dreams, and so prolonged.
After such torments as she bore last night,
How light and soft her breathing comes. Ay, me!
Methinks that I shall never sleep again.
But I must shake the heavenly dew of rest
From this sweet folded flower, thus—wake! awake!
What, sister, canst thou sleep?

Beatr. [*Awaking.*] I was just dreaming
That we were all in Paradise. Thou knowest
This cell seems like a kind of Paradise
After our father's presence.

Ber. Dear, dear sister,
Would that thy dream were not a dream! O, God!
How shall I tell?

Beatr. What wouldst thou tell, sweet brother?

Ber. Look not so calm and happy, or even whilst
I stand considering what I have to say
My heart will break.
Beatr. See now, thou mak'st me weep:
How very friendless thou wouldst be, dear child,
If I were dead. Say what thou hast to say.
Ber. They have confessed; they could endure no more
The tortures—
Beatr. Ha! What was there to confess?
They must have told some weak and wicked lie
To flatter their tormentors. Have they said
That they were guilty? O, white innocence,
That thou shouldst wear the mask of guilt to hide
Thine awful and serenest countenance
From those who know thee not!

Enter JUDGE, *with* LUCRETIA *and* GIACOMO, *guarded.*

Ignoble hearts!
For some brief spasms of pain, which are at least
As mortal as the limbs through which they pass,
Are centuries of high splendour laid in dust?
And that eternal honour that should live
Sun-like, above the reek of mortal fame,
Changed to a mockery and a bye-word? What!
Will you give up these bodies to be dragged
At horses' heels, so that our hair should sweep
The footsteps of the vain and senseless crowd,
Who, that they may make our calamity
Their worship and their spectacle, will leave
The churches and the theatres as void
As their own hearts? Shall the light multitude
Fling, at their choice, curses or faded pity,
Sad funeral flowers to deck a living corpse,
Upon us as we pass to pass away,

And leave—what memory of our having been?
Infamy, blood, terror, despair? O thou,
Who wert a mother to the parentless,
Kill not thy child! Let not her wrongs kill thee!
Brother, lie down with me upon the rack,
And let us each be silent as a corpse;
It soon will be as soft as any grave.
'Tis but the falsehood it can wring from fear
Makes the rack cruel.

Giac. They will tear the truth
Even from thee at last, those cruel pains:
For pity's sake say thou art guilty now.

Lucr. O, speak the truth! Let us all quickly die;
And after death, God is our judge, not they;
He will have mercy on us.

Ber. If indeed
It can be true, say so, dear sister mine;
And then the Pope will surely pardon you,
And all be well.

Judge. Confess, or I will warp
Your limbs with such keen tortures—

Beatr. Tortures! Turn
The rack henceforth into a spinning wheel!
Torture your dog, that he may tell when last
He lapped the blood his master shed—not me!
My pangs are of the mind, and of the heart,
And of the soul; aye, of the inmost soul,
Which weeps within tears as of burning gall
To see, in this ill world where none are true,
My kindred false to their deserted selves.
And with considering all the wretched life
Which I have lived, and its now wretched end,
And the small justice shewn by Heaven and Earth
To me or mine; and what a tyrant thou art,

And what slaves these; and what a world we make,
The oppressor and the oppressed—such pangs compel
My answer. What is it thou wouldst with me?

Judge. Art thou not guilty of thy father's death?

Beatr. Or wilt thou rather tax high judging God
That he permitted such an act as that
Which I have suffered, and which he beheld;
Made it unutterable, and took from it
All refuge, all revenge, all consequence,
But that which thou hast called my father's death?
Which is or is not what men call a crime,
Which either I have done, or have not done;
Say what ye will. I shall deny no more.
If ye desire it thus, thus let it be,
And so an end of all. Now do your will;
No other pains shall force another word.

Judge. She is convicted, but has not confessed.
Be it enough. Until their final sentence
Let none have converse with them.

II.

THE DEATH SENTENCE.

(FROM ACT V.)

SCENE IV.—*A Hall of the Prison.*

Enter CAMILLO *and* BERNARDO.

Cam. The Pope is stern; not to be moved or bent.
He looked as calm and keen as is the engine
Which tortures and which kills, exempt itself
From aught that it inflicts; a marble form,
A rite, a law, a custom: not a man.
He frowned, as if to frown had been the trick
Of his machinery, on the advocates
Presenting the defences, which he tore

And threw behind, muttering with hoarse, harsh voice:
"Which among ye defended their old father
Killed in his sleep?" Then to another: "Thou
Dost this in virtue of thy place; 'tis well."
He turned to me then, looking deprecation,
And said these three words, coldly: "They must die."

Ber. And yet you left him not?

Cam. I urged him still;
Pleading, as I could guess, the devilish wrong
Which prompted your unnatural parent's death.
And he replied: "Paolo Santa Croce
Murdered his mother yester evening,
And he is fled. Parricide grows so rife,
That soon, for some just cause, no doubt, the young
Will strangle us all, dozing in our chairs.
Authority, and power, and hoary hair
Are grown crimes capital. You are my nephew,
You come to ask their pardon; stay a moment;
Here is their sentence; never see me more
Till, to the letter, it be all fulfilled."

Ber. O, God, not so! I did believe indeed
That all you said was but sad preparation
For happy news. O, there are words and looks
To bend the sternest purpose! Once I knew them,
Now I forget them at my dearest need.
What think you if I seek him out, and bathe
His feet and robe with hot and bitter tears?
Importune him with prayers, vexing his brain
With my perpetual cries, until in rage
He strike me with his pastoral cross, and trample
Upon my prostrate head, so that my blood
May stain the senseless dust on which he treads,
And remorse waken mercy? I will do it!
O, wait till I return! [*Rushes out.*

Cam. Alas! poor boy!
A wreck-devoted seaman thus might pray
To the deaf sea.

Enter LUCRETIA, BEATRICE, *and* GIACOMO, *guarded.*

Beatr. I hardly dare to fear
That thou bring'st other news than a just pardon.
Cam. May God in heaven be less inexorable
To the Pope's prayers, than he has been to mine.
Here is the sentence and the warrant.
Beatr. [*Wildly*]. Oh,
My God! can it be possible I have
To die so suddenly? So young to go
Under the obscure, cold, rotting, wormy ground!
To be nailed down into a narrow place;
To see no more sweet sunshine; hear no more
Blithe voice of living thing; muse not again
Upon familiar thoughts, sad, yet thus lost—
How fearful! To be nothing! Or to be—
What? O, where am I? Let me not go mad!
Sweet Heaven, forgive weak thoughts! If there should be
No God, no Heaven, no Earth in the void world;
The wide, grey, lampless, deep, unpeopled world!
If all things then should be—my father's spirit,
His eye, his voice, his touch surrounding me;
The atmosphere and breath of my dead life!
If sometimes, as a shape more like himself,
Even the form which tortured me on earth,
Masked in grey hairs and wrinkles, he should come
And wind me in his hellish arms, and fix
His eyes on mine, and drag me down, down, down!
For was he not alone omnipotent
On Earth, and ever present? Even tho' dead,

Does not his spirit live in all that breathe,
And work for me and mine still the same ruin,
Scorn, pain, despair? Who ever yet returned
To teach the laws of death's untrodden realm?
Unjust perhaps as those which drive us now,
O, whither, whither?

Lucr. Trust in God's sweet love,
The tender promises of Christ: ere night
Think we shall be in Paradise.

Beatr. 'Tis past!
Whatever comes my heart shall sink no more.
And yet, I know not why, your words strike chill:
How tedious, false and cold seem all things. I
Have met with much injustice in this world;
No difference has been made by God or man,
Or any power moulding my wretched lot,
'Twixt good or evil, as regarded me.
I am cut off from the only world I know,
From light, and life, and love, in youth's sweet prime.
You do well telling me to trust in God,
I hope I do trust in him. In whom else
Can any trust? And yet my heart is cold.

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